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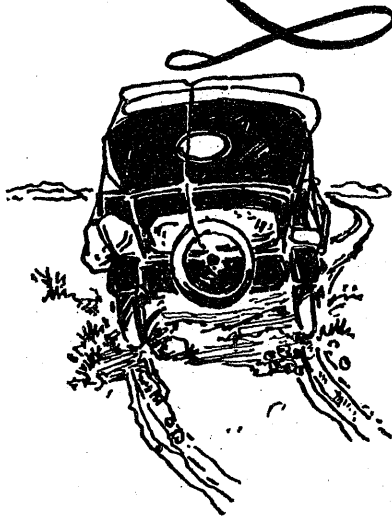
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ROVING WITH THE MIGRANTS



ADELA J. BALLARD

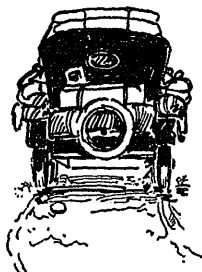
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ROVING WITH THE MIGRANTS

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COUNCIL OF WOMEN FOR HOME MISSIONS



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FOREWORD

THESE pages are sent out to introduce a little-known group and to suggest the possibilities of this great home mission opportunity; to paint a word picture of the work now being done in migratory camps. They are aiming not to give statistics, for these change overnight; not to designate the locality of the need, for crops may shift in a season; but to present facts which are true of the group as a whole, and to stress a phase of American life which holds either menace or promise.

The national women's home mission boards, societies, and committees of the United States and Canada are co-operating through the Council of Women for Home Missions in the happy task of following these migrant families wherever they may go; of finding them where they are; of bringing to them and to the communities which harbor them the message of the two great commandments—love to God and love for man. This is the migrant challenge. Whether migratory labor is to be an asset or a liability in America's future—economic, social, and spiritual—will be determined by the way in which church and community groups accept or refuse responsibility.

The picture given of camp and Christian Center work is a composite made up of incidents culled from reports. A few pages are quotations from articles which have been previously published in denominational magazines. Much of the material comes from the personal experience of the writer during the time that she has had the privilege of roving with the migrants.

A. J. B.

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MIGRANTS

BORN in the cotton, reared in the fruit, going on to beets or onions or cotton or cranberries, housed under a tree, beside a ditch, in tent, or shack, or 'dobe hut, they live untouched by education or sanitation. They are far afield from human kindness; in the community but not of it—a tremendous challenge to the followers of Christ.

ROVING WITH THE MIGRANTS

I

THE MIGRANT AND HIS WANDERINGS

A RICKETY Ford lurched up to the roadside gas station, and as the rusty brakes screeched to a full stop, a babble of childish voices rang out. Scanty of clothing, smeary of countenance, but for the most part bright-eyed and happy, the brood of youngsters that peered forth was full of interest in all the surroundings. These brown-faced children spilled over the edges of doors, they wriggled in the laps of their elders, and sprawled over every available inch of floor space. One was perched on the pile of kitchen equipment fastened to the back of the car.

The car itself was a marvel. It held not only the family, from grandmother to cousins and aunts, but it also carried all the domestic possessions. Its rear bulged with household goods. Each running board was piled so high with rolls of dingy bedding that it was a miracle how the family had ever climbed into the seats. But it was the top of the automobile that held the crowning glory of the family fortunes. There, strapped tightly to the sagging fabric, were two weather-beaten mattresses, and on top of these a double-decked hencoop sat jauntily. In the lower compartment a dingy, meditative goat contentedly munched wisps of fresh alfalfa, while above him six nondescript hens scratched agitatedly. The family was on its way, and with most unusual forethought, the milk and egg supply accompanied

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the quartette of babies. The cotton crop had called; one more migratory family had answered, "Coming!"

As a stop was made for gasoline, one of the mothers left the car. A friendly smile and a word for the whimpering baby in her arms brought answering friendliness, and finally the timid query, "What do for this kind o' sick?"

"This kind o' sick" was an angry-looking sore on the baby's throat. The nurse, whose "Chevrolita" had come to a stop beside the migratory group, looked at the sadly neglected mite. Instantly a first-aid kit appeared, and tender fingers cleansed and bandaged until, eased, the tiny patient ceased sobbing and sank back into motherly arms to fall asleep.

Amid a chorus of appreciation in their own language, the car wheezed onward. An anxious voice floated back, "What do 'nother day, Señorita? You tell! Babies mucho bad; mucho sick! Who tell us?" Then the voice was lost in the distance.

It was to serve the thousands of such families found in camps and along highways, in orchards and in fields throughout the nation, that the Council of Women for Home Missions created the Committee on Migrant Work through which the churches function in sending trained workers into this previously overlooked field of service. Little more than a decade has passed since the work was opened in eastern agricultural centers. These years have brought the knowledge that nearly every state in the Union has migratory workers within its borders. It is realized in increasing degree that more must be done to safeguard this nomadic throng if it is to be rescued from the evils

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of a roving life. The need of the migratory child and of the seasonal labor family is being stressed in social service and in home mission groups throughout the country.

In this recognition of a nation-wide problem there is hope for the future. The need cannot be met until all the agencies for betterment, religious and social, join forces in a unified program which shall educate local communities to assume responsibility for the welfare of this large but little-known group. The natural questions arising among church members to whom this opportunity for service is introduced are: What is this migratory group? Where is it? And why?

Who are these that join the endless procession of human beings seeking bread, that follow the crops, that serve in section gangs, that man the canneries, that delve in mines, that flock to the fisheries? Why all this nomadism? What type of person will follow such a life?

Along a rain-drenched path in a Hood River orchard trudged a slight, burdened figure, apparently a mere child. But as the burden was shifted, the flushed face that came into view belied the childish figure. There was hardened experience in her blue eyes, and bitterness in her tense lips. The Council worker paused a moment to question. She glanced at the near-by wayside kitchen. A washtub turned upside down served for a stove; a hole in the top held a piece of rusty stovepipe, where smoke was escaping; at the side, was a hole for stoking. Surrounding trees bore a fringe of small garments. That meant children, and children are the entering wedge for service.

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"Are there any children of school age in this camp?" came the usual question.

A shrug answered. Then, in bitterness, a life story burst out.

"Nope. No one fur school here. 'Spose I'd ought to be ther myself, but I never had no chance. My own kids ain't old 'nuff, an' I'm too busy makin' a livin' an' takin' ker of 'em to do no study myself. Heerd as thar's skools fur sich as me. Children? Yes. I got three. Live? Oh, most anywheres. I bin in Missory, but I kim from cotton in Oklahomy las' year. We couldn't make a go of it there so we had a try at beets. They wan't much good; couldn't make a livin' nohow, and I had to git rid of my first man—all these kids are his'n. I got me my second; he was right fine, but his 'pendix busted on 'im and they send 'im to the horspital an' I lost 'im. No. I ain't a widder; I got a man. I ain't had 'im long, but I guess I'm tru wid 'im. We got up to Idaho, but there wan't no work; then we kim to apples. No; I don't think we'll stay. Guess we'll go back to Californy in lettuce come December. No'm, I ain't twenty-one yit; anyhow, I recon I ain't. I don't rightly know. I was 'dopted an' I lost count of the folks. The man he had a trade an' stidy work, an' we, well, we just work at eny thing we kin do. It's mighty hard with the kids sick so much this year; one of 'em died on me when he was in the grapes. Don' know just what I'm goin' to do. This man, he don' care much fur my other man's kids."

This migrant was a white American. The next one met that morning had the bright slant eyes of the Orient and an appealing flash of smile as, with shy pride, she opened a

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lunch basket to show milk and apples and sandwiches in proof that the orders of the nurse had been heard and heeded. Little Miya Kagawa was the child of one of the Japanese bosses in the orchards. A Filipino boy greeted the arrival of the visitors with a friendly grin. He was one of a group of students studying at a western university, whose program was six months of work, then six months of study. As this camp was left behind, a glimpse of an Indian woman busy under one of the laden trees was our last memory.

In another camp only Indian faces could be seen. Children were everywhere—half-naked urchins, victims of malnutrition, many of them diseased. These nomads were of no particular tribe or country; many were half-breeds. Most of them had come from a distance—Alaska had sent a few, British Columbia many. From the government Indian schools come many children into these fruit districts. Next to this Indian camp was one in which all the workers were Negroes, for in large numbers the Negroes go out from the city into the cannery and truck farm for summer work. Also in the Pacific Southwest all the nationalities of Europe, Latin America, and the Orient may be found in the migratory army. Southern Europe sends thousands; from the Azores come large numbers of Portuguese. East of Chicago, although many Mexicans may be found in some fields of work, the seasonal worker is more than likely to be of southern European origin. Mexicans are in the Southwest in very large numbers; they have penetrated into the states as far east as Ohio. From the Kentucky mountains and the Ozarks, the hill folk come down into the valleys for the agricultural season. As the

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roll is called we find that every nation, every race has contributed its quota to the homeless throng. In one district where the Council of Women for Home Missions has given years of service, twenty-eight nationalities were found registered in one cannery, and when one appreciates the different national customs, the frictions between religious groups and the racial antagonisms involved, the difficulty of the work becomes apparent.

There are two main classes of people that make up this itinerant army. One—and this is the smallest group—is the family which drifts out of the city as the crops of May and June mature. These families spend the summer months and perhaps those of the early fall in the cannery shacks or in the broken-down sheds and barns usually furnished for the worker in the truck-farm and berry regions. They may go on to the cranberry bogs, perhaps staying until November. These families remove their children from school early and return them late. For instance, on a morning in early summer a class in a city school may find its attendance cut in half, and the teacher will know that beans are ready for the picking, spinach patches for the cannery. This drop in attendance is determined by the success or failure of the crop. Some years it is a mere drift; again it may be a wholesale exodus when economic demand calls for large numbers to harvest abundant yields. Many times it is the mother and the children who go to the canneries and the truck farms; the husband and father may remain with his city job while the family earn enough money for the extras of life as well as for some of the necessities. This group might be termed semi-migratory, for they do have

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some months of settled home life. Contact with school and health agency is possible for them during some part of the year. If the Christian Center can serve them during the months of employment and if the church is alert and can reach them when they return to the city during the winter months, such a group has some hope for betterment.

The second group is different. It may begin its migration any month of the year, for somewhere a crop is always ready for the harvest. The nearest crop lures. If it happens to be tomatoes, a cannery is the goal. That work finished, the last can sealed, grapes beckon. From these, they may go to cranberries. As winter approaches this group will seek the warmer states and drive onward to the cotton fields or to the fruit-packing houses where the work promises some shelter. It is easy for these people to forget that they ever had a home—if they ever did have one—except the one on wheels, or the tent by the side of the ditch. They seize eagerly the chance for a rent-free shack in orchard or cotton patch. Such a migrant thinks in terms of free housing. Why should he pay for better quarters when he can get what will shelter the family gratis?

Many of the children in these families are literally "born in the crops"; some of them also die there. These children have never known any other kind of life; some, perhaps, never will know another. Many of the parents are content with the life they live; they would not know what to do with a settled home and they have no desire to acquire one. Their dream is of some change in location. Something ahead promises a vague reward. They move onward toward that hope. The better type of housing in a can-

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nery camp is the peak of their vision. A few cents more a day is wealth to them. Any region promising such advantages will speed the procession.

Other differences subdivide the migrant groups. Some come from a self-respecting, laboring class. A dull season in the shops may send many men and their families into the agricultural fields; or the increased use of machinery may have thrown both men and women out of their usual work. Some of the most pitiful cases of protest against this enforced nomadic life come from this group of workers. These people also furnish some of the most tragic examples of inadequacy in the new life. Such followers of the migratory army are to a degree literate; they have known a different life, and they rage impotently against the economic conditions which make this wandering existence the only one possible for them. Longing for a different life for their children, many changes are made in the hope that another community may promise welcome for the migratory child. In this group is found fertile soil for the seeds of social revolt, and the "Red" is everywhere present to stir such smoldering discontent into flame.

Other members of the moving throng are to a tragic degree illiterate. To them there is little advantage in education. As one father of twelve children expressed it, "I kin fill the mouths of my kids without no book larnin', an' them kids is pretty good kids. I worked, and them younguns are goin' to work too! No school man is goin' to stick them kids in school. If they eat, they gotta work!" The migrant generally comes into the field untrained; he needs no training for his work. The labor boss, on the alert for a sea-

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sonal labor supply, has offered a job. A man can top beets or pull cotton, scoop cranberries or harvest onions regardless of whether he can read or write. If he has eyesight and can watch his fellow worker, he can get along without the language of his adopted country. Consequently, as he usually finds no impetus to a different life in his surroundings, he remains illiterate and continues migratory.

Where do we find the migrant? If we paraphrase the words of the Old Testament writer, "In whatsoever land a migrant sojourneth, there shall ye give him friendly Christian service and social justice," we must seek out the seasonal laborer in most of the states of the Union, and over the borders into Canada and Alaska. Comparatively few people realize the tremendous spread of specialized agriculture in our country. Where goes such development, there also goes the migratory worker. And not alone into the agricultural regions, but into the districts which furnish our lumber, to the endless mileage of the railroads, to the fish canneries and the oyster and shrimp shucking sheds he penetrates. To some extent the mines also take their quota of the group which wanders endlessly to and fro. When one has checked off the states growing fruit and vegetables, the cotton regions and the grain belts, the lumber camps, the railroads and the mines, the fisheries and the canneries, there is not much acreage left. East and west, north and south, few states are without a migrating group. In some states the migrant is present for part of the year only; in others a crop is being harvested each day of the three hundred and sixty-five. Not all this work is done by the migratory family; but in most districts a goodly pro-

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portion of the seasonal work is their contribution to the wealth of the state.

So far these pages have been concerned mainly with the migratory family in the agricultural districts. But the family group is seldom seen in the wheatfields; that work is done by the single men, as is also the work in the logging camps. Rarely is the family group found among lumber camp employees. But other fields, long considered those in which single men serve, are now being taken over by the man with a family. This is true of the members of the railroad section gangs.

The migrant is not entirely a rural problem; it is an urban question also. In Maryland, Baltimore has hundreds of families migrating in the springtime and returning in the fall. Somehow, in some way, these children must be fitted into the school program when they return to the city, even though they may have missed half of the year. In Pennsylvania, Philadelphia has the same situation to face, with an even greater number migrating. In Colorado, Denver has not less than four thousand beet workers in the city during the dull months, usually from November to May. Social and religious workers all acknowledged that very few of these people have had any contact with the best things of the city life, or any help from health or educational groups save when some crisis called attention to the family. Denver is doing a fine piece of educational work with her foreign-speaking population, but how to reach the drifters and how to make them a part of a city program is a puzzle. Social agencies in Portland, Oregon, made a partial survey of the families needing help during the win-

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ter months, and it was discovered that a surprising proportion had come from the apples, or the prunes, or the cotton. Such instances could be duplicated in other states and under other situations.

Why is the migrant? Very many times the migrant is the immigrant needing work immediately, unused to the language of the new country, having little or no knowledge of its customs. He may have been promised work before he crossed our borders and is looking forward to a wage which seems unlimited wealth. The life, bad as it is, is better than anything he has known in his own country. The whole family is promised a share in the new job. The newcomer has no trouble in finding work, for the grower or the employment agency must have cheap labor and have it quickly. Supply meets demand and strikes a bargain. The nomadic career of the newcomer begins.

There is no plan for migrancy. In the first months of the new life the migrant dreams of an American home. Perhaps his first field is in the grapes. This crop lasts only from six weeks to two months and is finished for the year. A new field of labor must be sought, so the migrant moves out from under his own particular tree or from under a bridge, climbs into his Ford and follows the trail of the pointing hands which someone has told him mean that in Arizona or in Texas a thousand families are wanted in the cotton fields. The hands may point to the nearer San Joaquin Valley, adjacent to his groups.

In the cotton camp, if he is fortunate in his choice of a field he may have a shack, which seems to him luxurious. In some sections his housing would be an arrowweed

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windbreak or a shelter of burlap and berry crates. But here again, either conditions repel or the work comes to an end and he is forced to move onward. By this time he is wiser. He knows more English. He has grown to know his fellow wanderers. They have told him tales of lands farther away. He knows there are different crops; there may be a better wage. After all, conditions were not so rosy in the cotton fields; there was smallpox and scarlet fever and measles and skin diseases. There may be milder climates. Not very clear in his thinking, he wanders on until he is so used to roving that he does not want a settled job. It is far too easy to evade responsibility and move on when the crop is garnered or something goes wrong. In the white American worker of the real migratory type will be found the same habit of thought. There is no language difficulty but the same happy-go-lucky attitude toward life and its responsibilities.

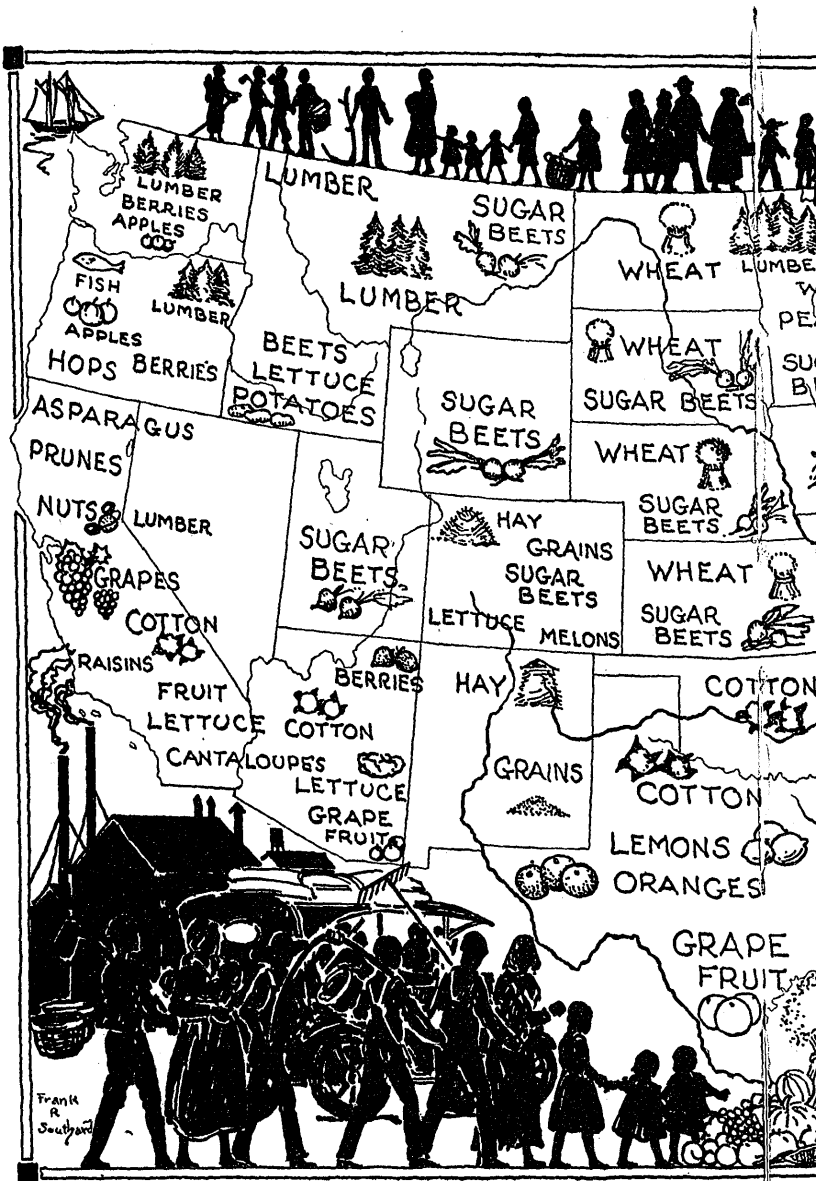
This is one side of the question. There is another which has been a great factor in creating the migrant habit. The migrant worker has found no reason to wish to become a part of any community into which he has gone. Wherever the groups go they know full well that they are admitted only as an economic necessity; that they are regarded as a necessary evil, a group to be used as long as needed and expected to move onward as speedily as possible when their work is finished. Crops must be harvested. In most cases human hands must do the labor, but the harvesters know that their children are not welcome in the schools. They are little wanted in any other part of community life; in some cases they are not even received in the churches. One

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worker, a man who coveted better things for his children, said indignantly, "Boss say, 'You stay all time; I fin' worka for you!' Why I want stay here? My children, they spit on them. When they make the party they no ask my girl. My boy, he went tha church; they say 'No wop be in here.' That man boss he say, 'You worka!' I do. But they no lika me ever, so I go other place, but all be the same. You getta tha crop in an' then you git—everybody tink dat." It is true that many communities have such an attitude, and who would wish to settle in an atmosphere of prejudice even if steady work were promised?

Illiteracy is one potent cause of migrancy. Race is still another reason; climate conditions make it impossible for the white American to stand the semi-tropical heat found in some of the regions which the migrant worker frequents. Also, the white American will not do the work in the "stoop crops" to any measurable extent, so here the Oriental and the Negro are in demand.

Whither Bound? is another question of great significance. At a crossroads in the Columbia River district, a watcher viewing the endless trail of automobiles saw in a single afternoon cars come in from states ranging from the Gulf to Washington. A Texas family was trailed by one from Idaho; New Jersey followed, and lower California lagged only because of its spent tires. Vermont came valiantly in on its rims, and Nevada heaved its way to a gasoline station. Wyoming asked the way to the Dalles, and a woman with a car full of giggling high-school girls wanted to know which turn to take for the Puyallup berry fields. During that one afternoon the roll call of the states could





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have been read from the license plates of the battered cars. The goals would have been as varied if one could have stopped the travelers to question them.

Whither bound? in a spiritual sense would have been a sadder question than one could bear to ask except in a hope that some of the group might be saved the penalty of a nomad life. Evil touches the group daily in a multitude of ways. The gambler and the bootlegger follow the migrant. Impurity and disease are everywhere present. Little of good is brought into camp life. The drug habit is a constant menace, particularly in the West, where the Mexican migrant raises marijuana in his back yard. If he does not stay long enough in one camp for it to grow, the vendor is at his elbow to supply the need. This plant of the Indian hemp family has a peculiarly vicious effect on the user, making him maniacal in the desire to cut and slash. There are heavy penalties against its use in some states where it is found growing wild or cultivated, but this law is not adequately enforced. One Mexican consul strolls from home to home in the Mexican section trying to persuade his people to pull up the weed and burn their drug supply. There are many ways of using marijuana; one of the most popular is to make cigarettes of it. Even schoolboys are found using it in this way. It is so easy to acquire that it is difficult to stop its use.

The community into which the migrant goes has scant welcome for him. The church has not come near to him, for many times the agricultural district is far from town or city. What of the future unless we take service to him where he is, meeting his need as he sees it?

II

WORKING WITH THE MIGRANTS

THE cranberry pickers had arrived, bag and baggage. They had set up housekeeping in the rows of shacks, and at the call of the row boss's whistle, the workers started for the bogs. Some fifty small children were left behind. Most of the babies were howling; the small children were protesting. "Centers" meant little to them. They preferred to be with their parents even if it meant damp bogs and various other discomforts. The whole wailing bunch was herded into the nursery. For two or three days life was not very happy for the two college girls who were trying to bring order out of chaos. Then the children realized that songs were pleasant things to sing, that hot lunches were good and baths endurable. Babies in unaccustomed cleanliness sank contentedly to sleep in improvised cribs. The comfortable room provided by the owner of the bog promised fascinating hours of recreation and play for the older children and a happy place for the elders to visit in the evening when the day's work was done.

The work combined the features of a day nursery and a Christian Social Center. The nursery was most popular. The basket cribs were always full. Extra babies had to be accommodated in rows upon the floor; and if all the available space there was taken, some found a resting-place on the table. The children too young to pick cranberries found amusement for the long hours and at the same time were being trained into new ways of life. They ceased to think

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of toothbrushes as "cute little hair brushes" and learned their proper use; they no longer ate the tooth paste because it tasted like candy. They were taught the principles of fair play and team work. They liked the worship hour and looked forward to the songs. Bible dramatization was their joy. They were taught to help prepare the lunch, to serve it nicely, and they learned something of the elements of good table manners. Clubs were formed to meet the needs of the different age groups. Recreation is what most of these young people need. After picking cranberries all day they are too weary for serious study. Something must be planned which will give them new ideals of citizenship and bring them into touch with Christianity, and this must be done during their hours of relaxation.

Such a program is not easy to work out. These children are a difficult group with which to deal; law and order seem unknown to them. In one camp the problem was brought to the young people themselves, and they appointed a group of "bouncers to bounce out" any who were causing trouble or interrupting the activities. Then everything went beautifully. When a "bouncer" called for quiet, he got it. When he told a boy to behave, there was an immediate change in deportment. Before the season was over things were working smoothly. There were candy pulls, and community sings, and evenings with games. Some of the younger married people came in during the evening. The clubs were most popular; hundreds of children and older people were reached in this manner.

This type of work among the families of the workers in canneries and on truck farms and in cranberry bogs had

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its beginning more than a decade ago, when the result of a survey of conditions among children in such regions was laid before the Council of Women for Home Missions. Here were neglected children for whom nothing was being done. The Council accepted the challenge, and in 1920 the first Centers were started in Maryland, New Jersey, and Delaware for the children working in tomatoes and beans and corn. Christian college girls were given charge of the Centers. Soon the work was extended. This necessitated more workers for the new Centers.

During the winter months the Committee Executives are making contacts with various colleges, meeting the girls interested in Christian service and selecting those capable of directing the Council's program. In the West the college girl is used in certain fields, but conditions in some western regions demand the services of a registered nurse, a public health worker, and a visiting teacher.

It is interesting to know that many of the girls who engaged in the Council work during their college days are now serving in foreign mission fields, having had their first experience in foreign missionary work here in the United States of America.

Poles, Bohemians, and Italians were served in the first Centers in Maryland, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and New Jersey. The children migrated from Baltimore and Philadelphia into surrounding country and states. They were out of school and away from settled home conditions many months of the year. Interstate migrations prevented any but the most casual school attendance during the entire year, for certain crops mature early, and others keep the

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workers into November before return can be made to the city. In some of these Centers work has gone on for several years; many of the same nomads return to the fields each year so that it is possible to do something of a continuous work even though it be a procession that is being educated.

Largely through the interest of an Eastern grower, one of the workers, who has previously served in a New Jersey station, is studying at Rutgers University where she is doing graduate work, specializing in sociology. The migrant station has been a laboratory from which she hopes to develop, under the direction of the School of Education of Rutgers, an educational program which will more fully meet the need of these underprivileged children. More of these research fellowships are needed. In the western fields another worker in one of the Council's projects is working for her Master's Degree, using the project for her thesis. Two colleges in that region are watching with interest this experiment in Christian social work.

The work in the East has been of the Christian Social Center type. This has been the method needed there. In the West it is more difficult to use this type of service, although some very successful work of this kind has been done. Wherever the children are in a comparatively restricted area and in touch with welfare agencies, the Center work is the happiest solution to the problem. One of the "Cot" canneries has a program that combines all types of health, recreational, and religious work for children. This was the spontaneous effort of the entire community and is apparently a self-sustaining affair. The Council Supervisor

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went in at the request of the community to tell them what was being done in other cannery districts. Beyond lending one of its workers to initiate the program, no financial support has been given by the Council.

This type of welfare work has been brought successfully to cannery districts in California and to the hop yards in many of the western areas. In California the canneries already have day nurseries. To institute them it is necessary only for the Council to persuade the cannery that such a program would be beneficial to the children and that it is possible without disturbing the cannery regulations. It is a difficult matter to enter the cannery the first year, but work the second season is by invitation.

Among the Negro migrants working in cannery camps, the group touched has ranged from the most primitive type found in the camps of Delaware to the fine self-respecting Negro families of many other regions. The Delaware group has gathered its Christian Center workers from among the students of near-by Negro colleges. To a difficult situation these young Negro girls bring adequate training and an inspiring leadership.

The Negro cannery workers and pickers in the bean fields come from many parts of the country, but most of them claim Florida, New Jersey, or Maryland as their home state. Each group is an inner circle of "kinfolk" and friends. Every other camper is a "furriner." Most of them have worked in berries in their own localities until the late spring—they follow whatever crop can give them a living; now they have arrived "in beans."

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Living quarters are the typical one-room shacks, or occasionally a two-story building. Those who are fortunate enough to live on the first floor have a screened porch. The cook-room is the central enclosure between two rows of shacks. The twelve wood stoves are for the use of all the families in camp. With from six to eight people in each shack, this is inadequate.

The workers are illiterate as a class, though a few of them have "gone into third reader." Most of them resent any attempt to educate their children. What has been good enough for them is good enough for the "younguns." The main ambition is to get as much money as possible, gamble a little, and indulge in camp meetings of a highly emotional sort.

Even with the most primitive of the Negroes, when it is possible to have the same people return year after year the improvement in living and thinking is obvious. For example, take a certain Negro group which is only a part of a Center. In this section more than one race and nationality work—a fine Christian group. The Negroes have supported the work anew though they have feared that racial prejudice would exclude their own children. Desiring help for children whether their own or others, they cooperate with the Council worker in every way. One mother said, "I've jus' prayed that someone like you'd come and stop some of this cussedness. My own men won't buy the likker, but lots of them men do. Now you will see that the boys don't get it." The happy thing in this field is that the worker is able to bring the different groups together in such



ON THE WAY FROM UTAH THEY WILL STOP IN OREGON FOR "APPLES," THEN GO ON TO CALIFORNIA.



MIGRANT CHILDREN PICKING COTTON.

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a way that the Negro children, by far the best behaved and attractive, share freely in the whole program.

Startling events occur in migrant camps. Big brother who gives baby sister a ride on the whirring belt fails to take her off in time and a right hand is permanently crippled. This accident, by the way, had an interesting sequel. Some mothers were opposed to the work of the Christian Center; they refused to allow their children to attend. Left to shift for themselves, the children came into the cannery once too often and the accident occurred. Then the fathers in the camp took a hand in affairs. They decided that no more children should be crippled for life, voted that Centers were good things to have, and that their own children should attend. The mothers were in a hopeless minority if any of them dared to oppose.

Where the Center is a tent, it has a habit of collapsing unexpectedly. One such collapse occurred in an eastern Center during a heavy rainfall. The results of hours of manual training were ruined in a moment, and there were scores of broken hearts to mend.

Sometimes the worker has a Court of Domestic Relations on her hands. One fine afternoon a mother walked up to the tent in the orchard and deposited her three-year-old son. She then went to the cannery. Ten minutes later a strange man drove up, alighted, and coming swiftly up to where the children were at play, claimed the small boy who had just been entered. Fortunately the worker in this camp was an older girl. She demanded an order from the cannery superintendent or surety from the mother that this

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man had a legitimate half interest in the child. These the man refused to secure and departed in anger. Later both man and woman returned together. The couple had quarreled and the mother had gone off with the child, securing work at the local cannery. The father was really attempting to steal the child in revenge. A reconciliation had been effected and the child went away, each parent holding a chubby hand.

One worker who lived on the grounds of the cotton camp was obliged to rise nightly to rescue some of the women whose husbands had imbibed freely of bootleg liquor and were in quarrelsome mood.

Another case which the worker had a part in settling, or in attempting to settle, for the mother settled things for herself, was that of a family consisting of a mother and fourteen children. This mother, a cannery worker, had eloped with a man who was younger than five of her children. The groom lived in a town about fifty miles away. Somehow the bride had managed to get together enough money to go to the groom's town, for the wedding, but the two were obliged to return on foot. In the meantime the town and the Council worker had been appealed to for aid in caring for the numerous family. The worker and the County Judge appeared on the scene simultaneously with the bride and groom. At almost the same moment the groom's parents drove up and took possession of their son who, without any visible opposition, went away with them after leaving with his bride what small change he had in his pockets. Vehemently complaining that one woman could not be expected to care for "such a mess of kids," the erst-

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while bride practically demanded assistance. The workers realized that the children would probably become public charges eventually. They presented some hope of salvage, for they were attractive children in spite of their filth and their poverty. But the following morning the question had settled itself. The mother had departed in the night, taking with her the five eldest, presenting the others to the state. As she could claim no legal residence in any state, the responsibility rested on the Court, which accepted the burden.

Those who read about Christian Center programs think of songs and games and hot lunches in orderly routine. There is, however, another side to the work. In some cases a child must be bathed and reclothed before the day's work can begin. Then there are days when "poison tablets" must be used, and every child in camp goes through the strenuous process of being treated for itch. There are burns to treat and minor wounds to cleanse and bandage. Mothers must be taught how to care for their sick children. Friendly contacts must be made in each shack.

Much first-aid work must be done in each Center. Some of the mothers are so ignorant that even the simplest treatment cannot be left to them. One such mother was just preparing to bathe the baby's eyes with carbolic acid when the worker caught sight of the label on the bottle. This type of mother is sure that baths will kill the baby. The foreign-speaking mother wraps her infant up like a little cocoon, face covered and arms strapped down like a little Indian. Sometimes the worker can effect a change of habit, sometimes not; but the effort must be made daily with an infinite patience that "hopeth all things."

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In asparagus, cotton, beet, apple, and grape regions of the West, a nurse has been the head worker. The Christian Center method of service is not practical in these far-flung fields that stretch over thousands of acres, with hundreds of camps. The lack of sanitation in much of the housing, the ignorance of the migrant worker regarding the simplest laws of personal hygiene, and the distance of the camp from the headquarters of the state and county health agency make imperative demand for health work. The nurse reports cases to the health and school agencies, waiting to serve a definite need. When counties in some regions are as large as states in other parts of the country, only individual service will demonstrate such need. With a nurse directly on the field, a fine cooperative work can be done by public and home mission agencies.

Roving with the migrants is a daily occurrence in the experience of the nurse working under the Council. She may start out to find a child half-dead with deep burns, in dire need of a hospital. All the arrangements may have been made for hospitalization. Back she goes to the shack where the patient was first located. During the night the parents, who have a terror of hospitals "that cut," have gone to a place twenty miles distant, or it may be fifty. If it is anywhere within her territory, the nurse follows and again makes the attempt to win trust and compliance with methods which will meet the particular need.

The day of the nurse is long. By seven o'clock she is packing the back of her coupé, to meet the day's needs. She stows away stacks of magazines, a few toys for sick children, picture post-cards, scripture cards. On special

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days the portable organ goes along, and always the first-aid kit. (A bottle of milk and a sandwich must always be included, for no possible eating place will present itself until after seven o'clock that night.)

The nurse may be planning to cover the thirty-seven acres of cotton included in one area, or it may be the seventeen islands in the asparagus delta. Perhaps her day means seeking out the scattered camps in the grape regions, where the groups find shelter under a bridge, come to rest under a spreading tree, or put up a dingy tent for the days of the grape picking.

She never knows what she will find in a camp—from impetigo to leprosy; anything is a possibility. A sample day would be a visit to some camp where in a group of thirty children of all ages and sizes there would be perhaps twenty-five with eyes swollen and almost sightless from neglect. Here she must make a general examination. Some patients must be checked off to be taken in to the nearest clinic; others given applications of argyrol, and rewarded for bravery with toys, papers, and cards. (There is a chance to give the mothers a friendly smile and an opportunity for questions. Then with the promise of a return on Sunday, when stories and songs are assured,) the nurse moves on to the next camp, perhaps five or ten miles away. Here a child is discovered limping about on an ankle, swollen and pus-filled. It is a painful operation to reduce the swelling. (The little lad is game. His older sister lifts him to an empty truck. A crowd of women and children gather to watch every move the nurse makes. The little patient sobs bitterly, but he holds his foot steady and grasps the proffered

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toy with smiles breaking through his tears. Half a dozen patients are in bed here with measles, some of the children are unsightly with mumps, and there is one well-developed case of smallpox. The nurse hopes this does not mean another epidemic, of which she has all too many on her hands.

School is out by this time, and the children are gathering at the entrance to the camps, for this is story day. Out comes *organito*, and the strains of "Jesus Loves Me" float out into the sultry afternoon air. It is nearing the hour when the pickers come in from work, and one by one the teen-age girls and boys circle round the younger children—then, near the close, the family groups crowd nearer, letting the evening meal wait until the story is finished and the final hymn sung. The children find the place in the Spanish hymn book for the older ones, and English and Spanish mingle happily as the story hour closes.

The day is not yet done, however. Reports must be made to the county doctor, and the county nurse wants word of some of her absentee migratory school children, for in this district school busses take the pupils into the town schools. After a hasty dinner and a few notes scribbled in her diary, the first-aid kit is repacked, and the faithful coupé plows its way out to a camp twelve miles distant, where sometime between the hours of midnight and dawn a new life will come into being. This time a flashlight and a bit of candle are part of the equipment. A dry-goods box picked up enroute serves as a table. Bundles of soft cloths and a package of baby clothes were packed in with the medical supplies, for after one case where a

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pair of baby socks was the sole wardrobe offered, the nurse was forewarned. One day is like unto another in the nurse's life, except that in cannery districts where the housing is better, she does not have to roam such wide areas in serving her patients. There, also, she has more chance for educational work.

Like the Christian Center worker, the nurse has surprising and startling experiences. In one place where the worker in charge of a mission requested help in putting on a clinic, the nurse made a first call on a group of children. Apparently everything was ready for work. Next morning when the nurse walked into the kindergarten, not a child was to be seen. They were all under the seats. "Poking sticks down their throats" had not appealed to them.

There is also much misunderstanding of doctor's orders. One family was sure that the doctor said to use one cup of mustard to five cups of flour for a plaster for a three-year-old child. This same family insisted that a mustard plaster must be left on for four hours. In a case of cold, instead of putting a teaspoonful of inhalant in boiling water and inhaling the steam, the boy put the drug in a glass of water and drank it! He was better next day. It is essential that the general public should realize this ignorance and also the superstition which make work with this underprivileged group so difficult.

But if a visitor will drive out to a cotton camp and there get a vision of babies wrapped in gunny sack and fed on pickles and coffee, in his mind will be a picture the years cannot erase. In the course of his journeying he may

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meet a bread line of revolting workers demanding food for their children, for their supply has failed because the rainy, foggy weeks have made the cotton unfit for picking. Sheets will never again mean just something to sleep between. They will mean cotton fields and families, low wages and unemployed days.

After one has spent a day in a cannery camp, canned goods will never be just a can of something to be opened, eaten, and forgotten. After he has visited the shacks and watched the mothers, or stood in the cannery and caught a glimpse of what it means to serve long hours in sloppy, disagreeable work, sizzling with the heat, or chilled with the cold, as the case may be, he reckons cans or crates or baskets in terms of human service and privation. He has seen neglected children—sometimes crippled, diseased ones—and he knows that much of this suffering has come from neglect and from ignorance.

The great need of the migrant is an education which will lead him to recognize the importance of obedience to the fundamental rules of hygienic living, and a training in the principles of thrift which will enable him to use wisely the money he does earn. One who knows the group well makes the assertion that in certain sections the migrant worker has enough to live on according to his own highest standards if he could be brought to think of the morrow and buy with the future in mind. This education should, in part at least, be brought to him by the employing agency, and it is being done in many instances, both by employing agencies and by individuals who hire migratory families. Growers have offered to buy at wholesale for their work-

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ers. In certain large colonies men are employed as thrift advisors. Companies employing the seasonal laborer are distributing budgets showing what it will cost to live during the idle months; listing the pounds of beans and other things which will be needed for the average family during the winter months.

If this service can be rendered by the employing agency and the individual grower, and if the community will accept the responsibility for enforcing housing laws—if such laws exist; and if not, for the enactment of the necessary legislation—then the work of safeguarding the migratory worker is well begun. Then, when the work of the religious agency brings to the group the love of the Master which shall transform the individual lives, and installs a program of service which shall bring help to weary mothers, wholesome fun and new ideals to underprivileged youth, and friendship to every migrant, then and then only the future of the seasonal worker holds hope for a normal life.

And this dream may come true. For if enough women—and men—from any community get into intimate contact with camp conditions and know camp problems, there will be not much difficulty in beginning to plan for such work as the Council of Women for Home Missions is doing in migrant fields. There may be delay, for even being aware of conditions and the need for betterment does not always provide funds or overcome all obstacles. But eventually the work can be accomplished where there is an awakened community.

III

THE COMMUNITY AND THE MIGRANT

MANY a community has suddenly come to realize that the whole character of its life has been changed almost overnight by a great influx of migratory workers. Take, for example, the case of one small community in the grape region which has only a few thousand inhabitants. Normally there might be twenty families of the semi-migratory type within the limits of the sleepy little township. Within twenty-four hours hundreds of migrants were calling at the local post-office for mail. Since only a small proportion of migrants ever use the mails, it may be imagined how many newcomers had in the one day filled the roadside camps and vineyard shacks.

That the migratory family is making a contribution to community prosperity goes unrecognized, yet the stores were filled with grape pickers stocking up for camp life. Children in tattered garments swarmed over everything. The local people received scant attention. Many of them sought the nearest city a few miles away rather than try to shop in the midst of such confusion. Ill-smelling camps were to be seen in every vacant lot on the outskirts of the town. Case after case of illness was reported. Vegetables in local truck gardens disappeared overnight. Naturally there was not much cordiality in the reception of the seasonal worker in this region. Yet all the people in town realized that the grapes must be picked and packed, and that these migrants were necessary to the job. So the health officer used extra

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vigilance in camp supervision and the sheriff worked extra hours in the effort to safeguard health and property.

Where the period of invasion occurs during the school year, the problem is even more puzzling. There are schools in the rural districts where in a single week the attendance of foreign-speaking children will jump from a ten per cent average to an overwhelming preponderance. In other schools, normally having large numbers of the children from the semi-migratory class near to a crop which will furnish family employment, the school may be almost disbanded in a day.

In some cases community sentiment is averse to having the migratory child put into the local school, even though the state law demands such action. One school official related his experience as an explanation of the lack of enforcement of attendance in the local district. He had herded the migratory children into the school as a matter of course. The parents had objected strenuously to having the children taken from the field, but finally law had prevailed. The official thought his troubles were over. They had only begun. Local mothers immediately protested at having such children in the schoolroom with their own offspring; the migratory mothers as immediately decided that their children should not be segregated in separate rooms. If this were done, law or no law, school attendance would cease and the children would go back to work.

There is something to be said on both sides; children who must be in many schools during one school term cannot keep up with the child who is regularly in attendance. The difference in background plays a large part, also.

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Neither can the migratory child be blamed for disliking the feeling that he is regarded as inferior and unfit for association with the local child.

The community attitude made enforcement of the law such an unhappy thing for the migrants that this particular school official gave up the struggle and decided to let things drift along in the old way until it was possible to establish schoolrooms near the migrant Center, with teachers trained in Americanization methods. Therefore in this locality the migratory child comes into the local school if he chooses; he is helped as much as the teacher's time will allow. Not enough migrants come in to disturb the social balance in the school, and the few who do come are so unhappy that they soon drop out.

Yet this particular town is much interested in friendship projects. Most of the mothers belong to the little club which is promoting friendship with the children of the Philippines, of Porto Rico, and of Mexico. Their children are interested in knowing the life of the young people of other lands. Apparently not a mother in the community had felt the urge for friendliness to the foreigner on the school doorstep. There is no feeling of responsibility for the welfare of these underprivileged children. If a migrant joins a crowd of chattering girls, the group dissolves as if by magic. No migrant is included in the sports. The school laws are ignored in the community because few of the people are interested in seeing that all children have equal opportunity.

Such a situation is unnecessary. Tact and common sense on the part of a mother and wisdom on the part of the

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school officials will make possible protection for the local child and opportunity for the migratory one. There are schools where the migratory child is segregated without the least unhappiness regarding the segregation. He understands the segregation lasts only until the new language is learned; that as soon as he is able to keep up with the other class, it is open to him. In the meantime, the school-room is giving him instruction in the laws of personal hygiene; he is entering into the school spirit and learning what a child needs to know in order to fit into the general school life.

It takes friendliness and patience to convince the migrant that new ways are good. Sometimes it is necessary to appear arbitrary. The babies in one camp began to sicken, until fifteen or twenty of them were wailing bundles of discomfort. The camp supervisor, working under the direction of the County Health Office, told the people of the dangers of uncovered food, and provided covered garbage cans and screened cupboards for each shack. Orders were disobeyed. The cupboards were used for the storage of spare clothing. An order went out: "Keep all food in the screened box. All food left uncovered after today will be put in the garbage can." The migratory workers, with a positive conviction that enteric and various other diseases were air born, that certain flies had no part in spreading infection in the camp, ignored orders. True to his word, the camp inspector put the unscreened food into the garbage cans. The greatest excitement prevailed. But in a day or two orders began to be obeyed, and in time the babies ceased to sicken. Today sanitary protection of food

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is accepted as a matter of course. A newcomer is promptly informed as to the regulations, and woe betide the disobedient!

In some communities there is a fine spirit of cooperation in the effort to take care of the group brought in to do the seasonal labor. All the local welfare agencies, the public agencies, growers' associations, chambers of commerce, and the local church groups accept the responsibility for the welfare of the migratory child in as matter of fact a spirit as they accept the benefits which come to them from the work of the seasonal laborer. There is no question about the enforcement of the compulsory school attendance law. Every child is in school whether its residence within the district is to be a month or six months. Extra teachers are provided during the peak of the harvest. Most of these have had training with retarded pupils. Other communities envy the achievement of this region without realizing that here the community attitude made the results possible.

This is the secret of the success of most of the work which has been done with migratory groups. Work based on a paternalistic effort, superimposed from without, is never so successful as when the local community realizes or accepts its responsibility. When the community initiates a program of work, success is practically assured. In one of the berry districts the chief of police became very much alarmed over the conditions in the camp. Hearing of the work done by the Council, he sought advice. The community was inclined to depend upon the police power of the law, shifting its own responsibility. As the Chief himself expressed

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it, "First they would not let me touch the kids lest it stop the pickers comin' in, and now they want me to take the migrants and the town kids and raise them up the way they should go!" His particular problem was the migration of thousands of high-school girls into the district. These girls were living, unchaperoned, in camps for months of the year, and yearning for a good time during their few idle hours. This they must seek at the roadhouse dance or accept the invitation of the young "toughs" coming out from a near-by city. Tragedy had occurred in too many instances. The growers are a fine class of men, but as one expressed it, "In the height of a berry season we have no time to act as nurses for a lot of giggling schoolgirls. We try to provide a good environment for them and then they must take care of themselves."

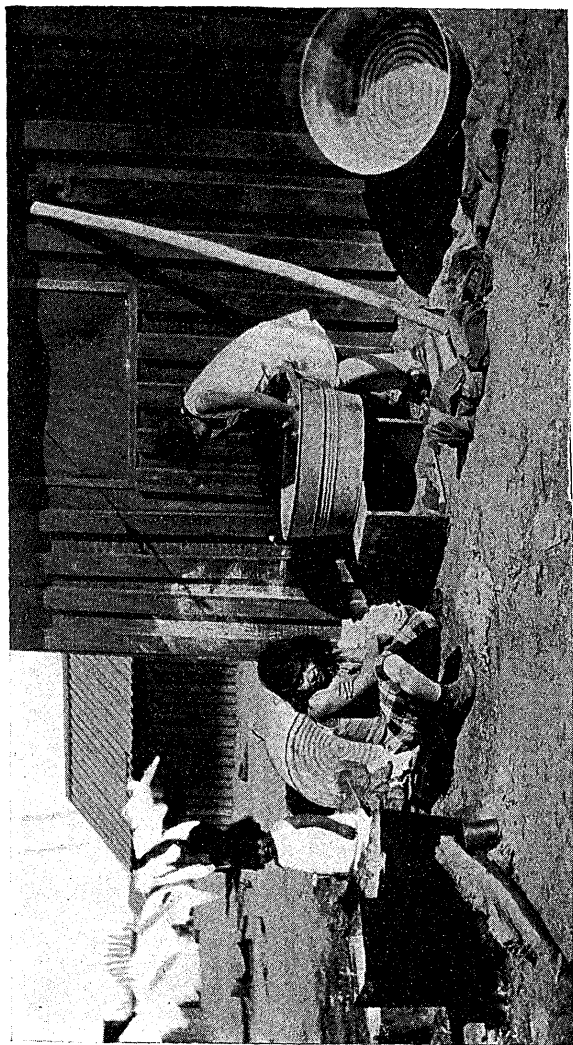
These girls do not comprise a real migratory class. Most of them coming into the field return to homes when the work is done. Most of them live within the borders of the state in which they are employed. The Police Department was able to meet the greatest need by an increase of highway patrol officers during the berry season. Men from town driving up to the camps were warned the first time; the second offence sent them to court. Not many weeks passed until word had gone out that the berry region was not open territory for joy rides, so that menace was reduced by half after one season of effort. Employers provided as much wholesome sport as possible; there was, consequently, little reason for seeking diversion in the town. The girls in the cannery worked in shifts. This left each group free every other evening. A college girl who was working in

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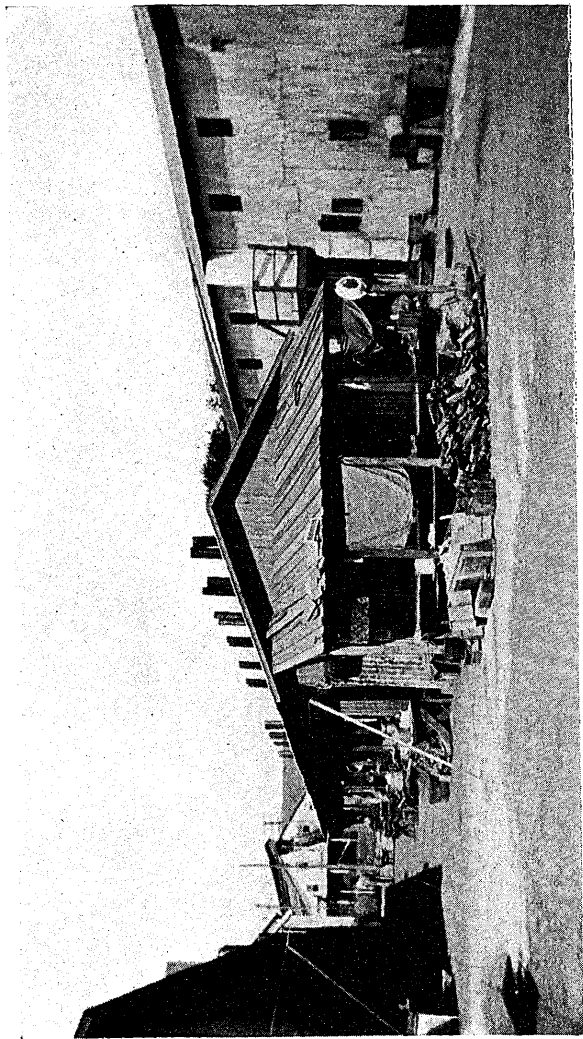
the cannery as part of the practical work in a sociology course was secured to help with an evening recreational program. The school officials lent the use of the school gymnasium; cannery officials bought equipment. The leader was accepted as one of the group, and roadhouse dances were not so popular as before.

The grower and the cannery executive have their own problems to meet. Communities are not always sympathetic in the appreciation of this fact. The workers employed in field and in cannery are usually from a class which finds it difficult to accept new standards of life unless some method of education accompanies the effort to change conditions in the camp. Many times there is entire surety that the owner of the farm, ranch, or cannery will consider money wasted when it is used in welfare work. The executive almost of necessity views the expenditure from the standpoint of economics rather than as a missionary endeavor. When he can prove that better laborers can be secured and more work accomplished with less absence for illness if certain improvements are introduced and welfare workers are allowed in the field, then the executive may hope for cooperation from his employing group.

Occasionally he may fail even though he has such cooperation. An eastern cannery man has a vivid memory of such a failure. Believing most earnestly that no child should be employed at too early an age, he voluntarily, with no state law to compel action, ruled that children under fourteen could not be employed in the cannery. The parents called an indignation meeting, induced a strike, and the workers left in a body, leaving the cannery with



A "LITTLE MOTHER" CARRYING THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FAMILY WHILE THE PARENTS ARE WORKING IN THE FIELDS.



SECTION OF A MIGRANT CAMP SHOWING AT THE RIGHT THE SHACKS WHERE THE FAMILIES LIVE
AND IN THE CENTER THE SHED CONTAINING COMMUNITY COOK STOVES.

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several tons of spoiling produce on its hands and no available labor supply in sight.

For a certain type of work we have long been in the habit of importing cheap labor, using a group not capable, for the time at least, of engaging in more specialized work. Group by group, the manual labor class has graduated into other fields of endeavor. We began with the European nationalities, later adding the Oriental. The next addition was from Mexico. Without the enactment of much new legislation, emigration from Mexico is being checked. The border patrol is barring thousands of Mexicans by declaring that work promised before entrance is contract labor, therefore illegal. The man without a promised job is likely to become a public charge, so he too is turned back. One new law that will make illegal entry a felony is all that is needed to complete the check on Mexican immigration. The Chinese, the Japanese, the Hindu are no longer admitted; many admitted in earlier years have returned to their own countries. In recent years considerable numbers of Filipinos have been coming. They are not always welcomed, and they resent the isolation, and the class and race distinction which they often find. In some sections of the country the community sentiment is very strongly against the admission of more Orientals even though these latest comers be under the protection of our flag.

Because of the differences in custom and moral sanctions, it has been hard for the Filipino to realize the reason for community attitudes, and with our wholesale condemnations or approvals, we put all peoples from the Philippines in the same category, whereas many of the Filipinos work-

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ing in our fields are a student class, worthy of all honor for the way they are toiling to study, that they may serve. Many of the young men are Christians; some of them are pitifully friendless. One of the workers under the Council of Women was able to do much for the Filipino boys "in lettuce." Noticing their downcast faces one day, she questioned them. Out came the story of the death of a comrade and the heartache over the fact that they had no time in which to arrange for the funeral of their friend. The worker immediately took the matter in charge. Then came the pathetic request, "Will you let us take a picture of you and the flowers by the casket so his mother will know we tell the truth when we write her he had an American friend and flowers at his funeral?"

There is frequent complaint from the local community that the migrant is taking the work away from the townspeople. But the attempt to secure local workers for the cotton harvest and the beet fields is unsuccessful, though they may, and do, enter the canneries. The native white American will not stoop to the "stoop" crops.

One of the best examples of community cooperation is found in the work in cannery centers in Delaware. Much educational work has been done there among churches, and there has been a publicity campaign to inform communities of the needs of the migrant and the type of work proposed. The Consumers' League of Delaware took the initiative in securing many of the opportunities for presenting the work. Two cannery men, the first year they were approached for assistance in starting a Christian Center,

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furnished a meeting place for the Center and the equipment. The Consumers' League, with the help of church groups and civic clubs, paid the salaries of workers; the Council of Women for Home Missions paid only for supervision and the running expenses of the Center.

The second year, four Centers were opened. The canneries paid the salaries and provided a place to house the work, while the Consumers' League and other groups shared in paying running expenses of the work. Only the expense of the supervisor and a part of the running expenses were paid by the Council.

One cannery man put up a new building for the work, expending more than four thousand dollars in making life a happier thing for the workers. Another man spent two thousand dollars in the same type of program. These same groups are the most active in securing protective legislation and its enactment.

Persons concerned in labor conditions in the state of Delaware say without hesitation, in face of all possible difficulties, that the work must go on and increase. One cannery man said, rather ruefully, "We put in the Center, we spent the money, now we must justify the expenditure to the company, and they haven't seen the work. But we must have it!" The problem was clear to him if not to the absentee owners. The cannery executive, or the Labor Commissioner, experiences difficulty in interesting those who have never met a migrant personally.

The work in the cranberry bogs of New Jersey is bringing the same fine cooperation on the part of the growers

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and of the community. Good housing has been provided for the Centers, and in one place a whole house has been set aside for the work of the Center.

To meet the need of the migrant in the community, whether urban or rural, is not an easy task for a community. In the first place, state laws vary; what is legal in one state may be illegal in another. Interstate migration makes it easy for a community to avoid the responsibility of the education of the migratory child if it is loath to assume that responsibility. That same situation makes it equally hard for a sympathetic community to enforce school laws. To put a child from a neighboring state into school, using public funds for his education, is illegal in some states.

Sometimes it is difficult to convince local churches that this work among the seasonal wanderers is best done interdenominationally. This attitude comes largely from a misunderstanding of the whole situation. In the first place every faith and every creed is found in the migrant camp. Sometimes, it is true, there is no faith; but what is possessed in prejudice often builds the wall of misunderstanding. These people may not be loyal to whatever fragment of creed they hold, but not one of them will allow criticism of that belief. In many fields the migrants are largely Roman Catholic by heredity if not by conviction.

The manager of the field or camp, by whatever name he may be called, does not want controversial matter introduced. In some fields a denominational worker will be forbidden, where interdenominational effort will be admitted without question. In a region where much seasonal labor is needed, the "boss" was notified that if he continued

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to admit "sectarian teaching" in the camp, the labor group would be circularized with warnings to avoid that locality.

It can readily be seen that an executive, responsible to his organization for maintaining an adequate labor supply, could not admit sectarian teaching or give support to such work. Also if we are to have a standardized program for camps, it is essential that one organization have the work in charge. To keep the teaching non-sectarian, the work must be non-sectarian.

The Christian message is welcomed by the migrant, but most of them are puzzled and repelled by the intricacies of denominationalism. There can be no hope of the establishment of church or mission in this work among people who are here today and gone tomorrow; even the crop itself may be shifted a hundred miles. No one denomination can have a church at every crossroad. But every denomination should see to it that the church meeting the migrant shall be a symbol to him of faith, friendliness, and fraternity. Surely Christians want these wanderers to feel that any evangelical church is a home. If they must wait to reach some particular denomination, in many cases it would mean complete loss of touch with any church. Also any church near the migrant camp must be brought into the camp program if that program is to be a stable one. The work must be done together if it is to be done at all.

IV

WHAT IS THE MIGRANT THINKING?

THE little girl who defined an educated man as one who works his own "thinks" probably never heard of a migrant. But there are many of them who work their own thoughts in a way which proves that illiterate though they may be in "book larnin'," they are capable of judgments; and if thinking most independently about community attitudes is a proof of education, then they are educated.

In an eastern city the group which drifts out into neighboring states for the summer months had been gathered into a home in their own neighborhood for club meetings and for meetings which were a combination of a community sing and a prayer meeting. All went well until it was suggested that the group attend the church of which the volunteer worker was a member. For one service this was a novelty and all right. But if it threatened to become a habit! That was a different matter. A Bohemian member of the rejected group was decided in his pronouncement: "I don't believe Jesus Christ ever meant churches for just one kind of people. He didn't have churches anyway when he preached, an' I don't believe the people who act like — Church know much about him! I work hard. My kids can't dress good, but I guess the Lord cares just as much for us as anybody! It won't do my kids any good to try to go with those Sunday school folks. It 'ud turn 'em away from good instead of helping 'em to find it. I ain't goin' to churches no more."

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An Armenian migrant was equally bitter in discussion of the religious contacts which her people had with settled communities. "My people have been martyrs; they have died for their Christ; even my own people—they were killed for their faith before my own eyes. I only escaped. But when my boy goes into a young people's meeting, they say, 'We don't want wops here.' He left and he says he will never go into a church again; he is going other places and I cannot stop him. My girl has a fine voice; she has taught music, but they do not want her to sing; if she does, the choir will leave. My boy and girl, they say 'religion isn't true or the churches would want us.' My family, they believe in God, but they do not believe in American churches or American Christians; they both hate us." It is only fair to say that this prejudice against Armenians is for the most part regional. In fact, it is in the agricultural districts that the prejudice is strongest. But it is nevertheless a serious question, for most Armenians, at least the older group, are Christians, and they resent the lack of fellowship on the part of church people.

An Oriental farm migrant, when faced by a most unwise church visitor who assured him that after all nothing which happened on earth mattered, for we would all be happy together in heaven, was equally skeptical about the reality of the presence of Christ in the lives of Christians. When the visitor had finished what he had to say, the Oriental burst out in a manner not in the least like his usual calm courtesy: "You tell us God loves us! Why isn't he making your Christian country just to us? I come here and I work hard. I am honest. I teach my children to obey the law.

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I try to make good Americans of them. You take our work. You, oh, yes, you try to make good Christians out of my children by taking them down into Japanese town to a Sunday school. Your minister he is good Christian; he invites me into his home and comes to mine. But you! You say, 'Yes, you can go to heaven, but you cannot be in school with my child; you cannot own land; you must move just so often, because you might feel you owned land if you stayed too long in one place.' You will not allow us to vote for we cannot take out citizenship papers. You cannot prevent my children being citizens, but you are sorry for that. I do not want your religion; it stands for too much injustice."

The migratory mothers think anxiously not only of racial attitudes but of environmental conditions and their influence on the children of their families. A cannery worker expressed her anxiety over her child, and her face showed perplexity. "I am wanting my child not to be bad. I am not Christian, but I like the way Christians should act. My children they live in house by bad place. They hear bad all time. By and by they be bad. If Christians really love us, why don' they make houses for us where people be good round us? They let me go church, but what good if I hear bad all week? It make me not understand. Me too ol' for change, but my children, they be bes' good to be Christians. But no matter where go, bad place for cannery people live, so all be bad b'imby."

A Mexican girl in the camp by the roadside said to the Council worker: "I'd like to be like other girls. But how will I learn? I never see them to talk with. If I go to

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school, they go out ahead of me. When I come out, the other girls wait until I'm a piece down the road before they come, so I'm all alone unless there are two cannery girls in the school. You say, 'Don't go to road dances.' The boss gives me free tickets for a ride there, and says, 'Go on; have a good time!' Then we all get together and we forget about being good. We don't want to be bad, but we do just what the others do, and sometimes it is not so good. How do you make God care so that you don't forget? Why does he forget to make other people care? We work an' we like good times. Yes, I know you feel different, but you make you livin' by feelin' different." Then the girl paused, looked embarrassed, and finished hurriedly and shyly: "I know you do feel different an' want to have us have good times—it ain't just the livin'! But," she flung back defiantly as she went down the road to the berry patch, "you can't tell me those people in this town care a whoop whether we are good or bad. I know the way they act! An' most of 'em go to church. All they want is that their berries don't rot."

Another worker was taxed with the fact that he had not taken out citizenship papers. His answer was terse and emphatic. "Why should I? Now if I get into trouble the Consul is my friend; be a citizen, and I go to jail." Anyone who sits in the courts in that district would concede that the migrant knew whereof he spoke.

If this attitude were the only attitude among migrant workers then the situation would be hopeless indeed! But there are communities where there is a different atmosphere; there are churches which do not allow shabbiness

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and want of culture to bar from friendly contact, communities where the real worth of the worker is recognized. Where this has been true, there has been sincere response on the part of some of the seasonal workers. A call at the shack of a Russian cannery worker brought out some decided opinions. She was delighted with the work the churches were doing among her group. She had been picked out of most discouraging conditions; she had been given a chance to learn enough English to use in daily life. She had been taught how to take care of her fragile baby—her eleventh, by the way. Her obstreperous boys were in clubs which were teaching them the ideals of good citizenship and Christianity and at the same time giving them a jolly good time. She was meeting Christianity in action and finding it good. After months of contact with church people she asked: "What makes a church different here? I am Greek church, but have same God. My church in Russia would not care whether I learn or live comfortable. Your people, they are strange to me, but they help me to make better home and go to school. It is just like music the way they treat me. I would like to go to your God's church and find out what is different. I think there must be more love in your religion."

Here a church is accepting the challenge of the large group of cannery people in its parish. The verdict of that particular Russian woman would be echoed in a good many shacks of the district. Of one employer, one man said, and a hundred others would have echoed: "We like to work for this man. He looks out for us an' we would work all night for him if we thought his stuff was goin' to spoil."

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The migrant goes to church hoping to find friendliness; and having once found it, he has a childlike faith that it will be the same everywhere. One Portuguese woman who spends most of her life in the canneries seems quite willing to conclude that most churches are friendly—her one exception seems to be her own. She is sure all churches are good. She not only encourages her family to hunt up the church nearest the cannery, but she gathers in all other workers possible. One night she came in to a small mission with thirteen following hesitatingly behind her. "Like sheep, one come all come," she announced cheerfully. "It no matter what church I go, God he make jus' as good I go here as to other church. All same God everywhere. Move too much to go one church all timé. I go Methodist'; sometime my girl she go Baptis'. Maybe I go there too some day I get time."

Another migrant to whom a church woman had shown special kindness did a very significant thing. Someway, in spite of all precautions to the contrary, she found out that the work of this woman was reported to a home mission board, although it was volunteer work. This migrant insisted upon her friend sending in to this board a certification which read something like this:

To whom it may concern:

This is to say that Mrs. —, who is Protestant, has come to the field where I work every day. When my child burned, she saved me much distress and much money, and *she never made me feel different because I am Portuguese and other religion*. This is to say she is a good person and a Christian.

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The document was evidently the combined effort of the grape workers, and it was eloquent to those who knew conditions in labor camps and community attitudes.

One Filipino worker who had the misfortune to be mixed up in a race riot when a group of his fellow countrymen were imported into the fruit district for work completely lost faith in Christianity because of the racial prejudices of the church people and of the Americans. His pronouncement was terse and most uncomplimentary. "They talk like saints in meeting, and act like hell when they get outside."

The migratory worker is puzzled and disillusioned by many things. Like every other group of people, the migrant is good, bad, or indifferent, as the case may be. But certain things are true of most of these people. They do not like to be thought of as a class apart. They would like to have employer and community treat them as human beings. If Christians believe that the world is a brotherhood, the migrant would like to have Christian people act on that principle in daily life. The seasonal laborer believes he is doing a necessary part of community work and would like that fact recognized. The grower who recognizes that men working in the fields are not mere machines receives a more efficient service. One thing that stands out in migratory thinking is the fact that while the work of the social organization and of the home mission society is appreciated and the worker loved, the thing that wins hearts and makes the migrant feel that he is a part of the community is the friendly contacts made by individual grower and church man or woman. This means a personal interest. The

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migrant shares the feeling of the Indian girl who replied to a somewhat condescending offer of help, "You want to do things for us; but if you do not want us, we do not want you to do anything for us."

That the migrant worker does not realize the difficulties of the employer is too true. He knows only that regardless of the failure of the crop, the employer stays in his home, and he still eats. Neither of these things is true of the migratory worker. That the employer may have everything he possesses mortgaged or that he may stay awake nights wondering how he is going to raise money to open the work next season makes no impression on the man who has not even a shack to shelter him and his family of ten or twelve.

It is not the migrant alone who fails in having an understanding of the problems meeting the grower or the agency securing the labor supply. Some impossibilities are asked. Not long since, in one of the cities of the West a meeting was held to discuss the interests of the workers in factories, mines, and agricultural labor fields. During the meeting an excited leader arose and declared that if a certain corporation wanted to do so, it could transform the housing conditions in half the state within three months. As a matter of fact the corporation has no power whatever over the farmer except that of persuasion. This is being used to the utmost, and hundreds of new houses have been built.

Some of the most pitiful cases of need among the unemployed are found within the ranks of the migratory throng. Drought or frost has cut off the source of their livelihood. Their need is acute, for the only thing the migrant possesses

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is debts. Generally he has a large family. Relief funds do him little good, for most relief work is organized to benefit citizens only, although in many states it is the alien who has done the seasonal work. The migrant knows that it is he, the seasonal worker, who has brought wealth into the state, and his heart is full of bitterness when relief denies him what it gives freely to the citizen.

Working with the migrant does bring a change in attitude. One mother brought a happy, kicking young son of six months to the clinic proudly. "You surely do not think this baby is sick?" The nurse asked the question quizzically. "Not much," answered the mother proudly. "You jes bet I never have another sick kid. I done everything you say, and he's never been sick a minute in his life. I brung him to show you he ain't sick. He nurse when you say. He don't have too many clothes. I keep him. I think you know!" This woman had lost four children in quick succession.

A mother whose children had been in the Center all through the cannery season, and who had worked in other canneries where such work as that carried on by the Center was not admitted and where painful accidents were continually happening, attended an evening recreational program. Her face grew brighter each moment as she listened to the songs and joined in the wholesome fun. Finally she could keep silent no longer and she burst out: "This is the best thing that ever happened to the kids. I just wish you folks would go everywhere that we can stuff."

One Christian Japanese wrote gratefully of the nurse's response to the "Macedonerscry." A Mexican man im-

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plored the supervisor of the field not to remove the worker who had been placed with them for a brief season. He was inclined to be indignant as he said, "If you borrow of her, then I will forgive; but if you take, I shall keep a grudge on you."

It is only the ignorance of the migrant that leads him to resent the attempt to introduce new ideals of living. Trust must be won before he will accept suggestion for better things. He will use an ointment "good for man and beast" trustingly and refuse the service of a doctor, even though that service be free. The children will be fed on fried eggs and sausage whether the age be six months or sixteen years. A friend only can induce change. With a Center ready to care for the children, the migratory mother has been known to declare defiantly, "You never had no kids. Nobody that ain't had kids is going to take any o' mine. Mothers kin take better ker uv younguns eny how and thes kids go by me." And to the berry patch the wistful children went, though very much against their will.

Ignorance and a generally irresponsible attitude toward life lead some migrants to take startling ways of providing for their families. An advertisement in the newspaper of a district where fruit tramps congregate startled not only Council workers but also the social workers of the state. This advertisement stated briefly: "Ten children to be given away. Call at — Oil Station at 10:00 Wednesday morning." The worker who investigated met utter frankness in the owner of said ten children. "My wife is gone. I'm a fruit migrant and I can't take care of ten young ones and earn a living, but if I find good home for 'em—that's

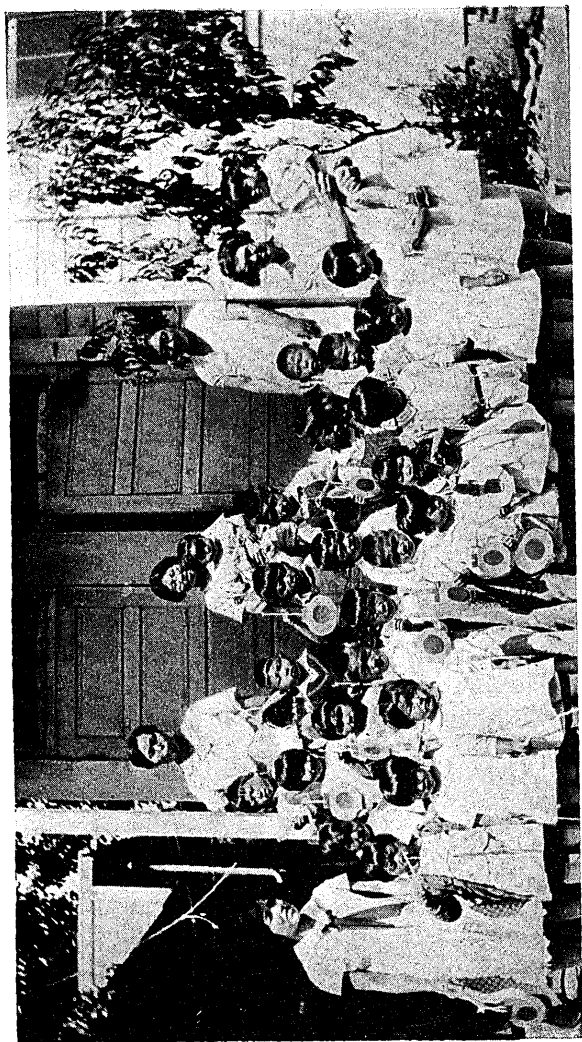
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all anybody could ask. I'm going to work in apples. No'm I didn't give 'em all away—one got sick on me, and he's in the horspittle—no one wanted a sick kid. No'm a man hain't got no call to try to keep kids when he ain't got no wife." There was no hesitancy in stating the case—not a glimmer of a feeling that parental responsibility had any claim on his future. The investigating workers agreed with him that the children were better off in other hands than his; but the other hands selected by him were not thoroughly approved, and seven of the ten children were retrieved and placed in state institutions, much to the man's disgust. He prided himself on having done his full duty and disliked the thought of outside aid for his family.

Fortunately for the peace of mind of the worker in the Center and in the field this is an unusual case. Usually the migrant clings to his child, even though he may have no conception of the effect the migratory life is having on his family.



AN OUTDOOR EYE CLINIC IN A SECTION WHERE THERE ARE ABOUT FIFTY MIGRANT CAMPS WITHIN A RADIUS OF THIRTY MILES. THE NURSE WORKING UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE COUNCIL OF WOMEN FOR HOME MISSIONS TRAVELS FROM CAMP TO CAMP IN ORDER TO REACH THE THOUSANDS OF MIGRANTS IN THIS AREA.



A VACATION CHURCH SCHOOL IN A MIGRANT CAMP.

V

RESULTS AND HOPES

IN THE Imperial Valley, California, with its border psychology, its racial antagonisms, its economic problems, and its struggling churches, our worker has spent years trying to create the mood which would make advance possible. The difficulties discourage people at the outset, but a bit of visual education proves enlightening.

A series of "Nationality Nights" brought each race in the Valley into intimate contact with the people of the community. Each nationality and race put on a program, not from the standpoint of need, but to show racial achievement. The result was a surprise to the community. There was talent in the Filipino camp; the Mexican could render sacred music in a manner that held the audience spell-bound; the Japanese had a culture that won admiration; the Negro had fought for advancement and his achievement had won respect. Before four nationality nights were given, the public was aware that the migrant had brought something more to California than just the work of his hands. Then came the finale, when in pageantry the white Americans depicted the gifts which the state offered to the newcomer within her gates. Races mingled in more intimate contact, and sympathetic understanding grew apace. Out of this experience came a vision of the possibility of a united service which should reach the need of the army of toilers. The community realized that gifts were offered as well as benefits taken by this migratory group.

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Previous to this experiment in program building, racial antagonism had been intense. One religious worker of another race, on going into the district to serve his people came away humiliated and discouraged, saying, "There is no place which welcomes me." After the days of fellowship and closer acquaintance this same worker was asked to go back for a period of service. He was at length persuaded to do so, but he went with doubt in his heart. A few days in the district changed the doubt to joy, and his report was, "God has been in this place." This story illustrates the change of attitude that invariably accompanies a real contact with the peoples of other lands.

This is the positive side of the picture. It is true that the migratory family is increasingly used in agricultural districts. It is also true that the evils of this wandering life are many and serious in character. And it is true that children are working long hours under bad conditions. But the hopeful thing is that there is increasingly widespread recognition of these facts and an effort made to change them. Not so long ago such conditions were accepted without much thought.

School boards are studying to make the school meet the need of these children who must have the school brought to them if they are to participate in its benefits. Women in various civic and church organizations are at work educating public opinion to allow legislation which will "place all children who work in industrialized agriculture under the protection of laws designed to protect them from exploitation through excessive hours and unhealthful working conditions." These groups are also approving the principle

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that "any state in which migratory children are employed should assume responsibility for the education of such children while temporarily within that state." These things indicate a change of attitude on the part of communities.

One state which has a heavy burden of responsibility for the migratory family is making an outstanding and successful attempt to protect and educate the child in agriculture. In the initial program this state has been forced to its action because of its warm climate, which allows a twelve-month growing season, the wide diversity of crops, and the tremendous influx of foreign labor, particularly Mexican. There was dire need of a state program. One of the school attendance officers estimates that in 1927, according to a school census taken in that year, not less than 39,000 children of school age were within the state but without any permanent home.

It is with intention that few figures have been given within these pages, for there are no accurate statistics on this subject. Everyone who has tried to take a census of the group or make a survey of camps shares the perplexity of the school attendance officer in the Imperial Valley who declared frankly: "I've spent the morning in camps, but whether I've registered one child twenty times or twenty children once, I do not know. They slide about like eels, and they all look alike to me."

Quoting from this same school report in 1927: "There were reported 102,405 Mexican children; 85 per cent of these children follow the crops for the greater part of the year—migratory laborers are employed in at least forty-six out of the fifty-eight counties of California." The Mexican is

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only one of the great number of nationalities employed within the state, but they form the largest group in the migratory throng in California and in one or two other states.

Because of this great body of homeless people, California is forced to make provision for the protection of the children following their parents into the nomadic life of the agricultural worker. Probably no other state has as many children in the crops, with the possible exception of Texas. Certainly no other state has so great a tangle of race and nationality as has California. This adds greatly to the perplexity of the one who goes among them to serve. For not one race but many must be understood. All races must learn to live together and to work together. As the worker tries to put this spirit of brotherhood into the program, it is very evident that the White American is not the only national having a superiority complex—it is a characteristic that is well-nigh universal.

This protection for the migratory children of the state of California takes the form of state-maintained schools for the children of migratory laborers, many of these placed within the camps. Ten thousand dollars was the cost of the initial venture. In the first days of this new program the state scarcely recognized the fact that this educational problem existed. Later the state and the county where the children were temporarily resident were induced to increase the appropriation. At the present time the migratory school is accepted as a necessary part of the regular state educational program.

If there are but few children in a camp, the regular school

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takes them in, perhaps adding a room. The grower provides part-time school bus transportation. If there is a large group, the employing body must provide a building and the state sends the teacher. The system is far from ideal. There is a minimum school day for migratory children of 240 minutes daily. The classes are overcrowded; the buildings inadequate. Worst of all, it is not always the best-trained teacher who is assigned to the migratory school. Sometimes, however, the building is adequate, well lighted and heated, and there are qualified teachers who ask to be assigned to remote schools in the "crop" districts and who refuse to be transferred even when offered much more attractive positions. Altogether, though much more could be done, these beginnings show something of what a state can do if a few people have caught the vision of an equal opportunity for all children.

All this is by way of background for the somewhat surprising results of the Council of Women for Home Missions in that state, where the worker can depend upon the school for support and cooperation. In many other states this same cooperation is given, but because of the limits of space only a few instances can be cited.

Where the children are already gathered and placed in school, the first and worst perplexity of the worker has faded. The children are found. The teacher is only too glad to have help in her program of lifting these children into a more normal childhood. In the early days of work there was frequently a questioning attitude. Was a home mission worker too religious to fit into any relationship with a school program? As to churches, some of them

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were inclined to wonder if all this health work and teaching of home hygiene did not savor too much of social service and not enough of evangelism. For instance, a school worker once asked a Council worker to teach the Christmas carols in the migratory school. The request closed with the words, "But remember, you cannot put any religion in this—this is school work!" The worker remarked quietly but decidedly, "I do not know how to teach the Christmas carols without telling the Christmas story." The subject was dropped. The carols were sung and no further trouble was made about religious teaching.

Following a thrilling visit to a cotton camp where she had seen babies saved from suffering and their mothers trained to care for them body and soul, a Council executive was telling a church group of the gratitude of these mothers and of her joy in this service. She hoped that in the group she would find volunteers to help with the work among the children in the cotton. Suddenly, at the first pause, a voice spoke with decision: "This is all very interesting, but our group does only evangelistic work. We are not interested in bodies, but in souls!" And it seemed impossible to make the woman see that the service must minister to both body and soul and that the mother whose baby has been saved from suffering will listen to any message from the one who has ministered to her child. It is such an easy thing then to present the One who came to minister to all the world.

But not all school officials are like the one who feared religion would be put into the teaching of the Christmas music. One man who investigated the work the Council worker was doing expressed himself in a succinct state-

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ment: "We want no denominational or sectarian teaching in the public school. But the more you can put Christian ideals into the school, the better we shall be pleased."

Four years of work in certain districts of this state has brought into action a real cooperation between home mission and secular organization. There is a definite recognition that it takes all the welfare agencies to meet even a small part of the needs of homeless, ignorant, and wandering children. County doctors who have been unenthusiastic in the initial stages of Council projects, are today leading in campaigns for financial support from growers and communities, working actively in camps, and never failing to respond to a case of need however remote. In fact, demands have been made upon specialists, clinics, and hospitals, and no reasonable request has ever been ignored. More than this, requests have been met with the response, "Call upon me whenever you need me."

Public school teachers have voluntarily announced story hours held by the Christian worker, and the children have been urged to attend. County school nurses have made health work in a Council project a part of their daily program. Red Cross workers have offered free service in first-aid and nursing classes and for work in nutrition education. This has been sensible education; the menu suggested was adapted to the foods possible for the migratory family to secure.

Occasionally cooperation has resulted in mirth, though tears of exasperation might follow. Results there were, but not happy ones. One group of migrant schools was struggling over the problem of undernourished children and the

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resulting tuberculosis. It was a Japanese group. An Oriental Parent-Teachers Association meeting was called to convince a group of Japanese parents that milk and eggs were necessary for the children, that there should be a mid-morning and mid-afternoon lunch of milk and crackers. Someone—no one would ever acknowledge responsibility for it—invited a food expert from a near-by city to deliver the convincing arguments. The gentleman delivered an address an hour long. When he had finished, the Oriental Parent-Teachers Association had been told that their children must not eat rice; that green foods were not necessary; that milk was but grass, and it would be just as sensible to send a child out to graze as to give it milk to drink. He proclaimed eggs animal food as well as meat; both were unfit for human consumption. The ending was the worst of all. Those Japanese people, raised upon fish, using it daily, were told that it was unfit for food.

The Japanese were puzzled. The teacher had said milk—every day! The man apparently wanted them to live upon one food alone—oatmeal. They did not like oatmeal! They did like fish and rice! They would put eggs and milk with the rice if “fatness” and lack of “coughs” depended upon it. Eat only oatmeal? No! With one more obstacle to overcome, the teacher and Council worker began again the work of educating the mothers.

It was in this district that the school and the county health nurse worked with the home mission agency to get a clinic started for the pre-school-age children. The school-age child was fairly well cared for, but in counties where there may be fifty schools and one nurse, not much time is

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left for the pre-school problem. In this clinic hundreds of children have been cared for, minor operations have been performed. A hospital in a neighboring town has placed a ward at the disposal of the clinic for any surgical cases needing hospitalization. The staff of this clinic is most unusual. For weeks, two American doctors and one Japanese, a Korean dentist, a Japanese and an American nurse, and three denominational field workers labored in peace and harmony without even a mention of religious difference. The workers found difference of opinion was no bar to service.

In this particular state the matter of social legislation is a source of state pride; enforcement of such legislation, however, is not always a matter for congratulation. Good housing regulations already exist, and in many of the districts, the camps are models. Public sentiment is demanding this.

In other regions, where there is absentee landlordism and the white American is almost as migratory as the dusky-skinned worker, as much cannot be said for either the enforcement of state laws or cooperation in home mission work with community interest. It is a difficult thing to convince the absentee executive that any overhead should go into welfare work, though the local officers know that the conditions in the camp thus served are resulting in an increased output of work. One boss remarked that he got "twice the work out of a picker when she wasn't always fussing over kids." The local executive also knows that the cost of keeping up a Center for the children where they will be safe from accident is very much cheaper than dam-

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age suits following avoidable accidents. In some districts where the work has shown results, the growers are entirely financing it. The sad thing is that home mission funds are so limited that only a few demonstration stations can be maintained. When these have shown what can be accomplished with a worker in the field daily, the work becomes to some degree self-supporting, and in many cases is entirely financed by local agencies. Then the home mission fund is released for its work of demonstration in some other community.

That migrants shall be neighbors and not nomads is as yet largely an ideal. Yet many communities have been brought to see that the migrant is a liability, that the dependable man is the one who has a tie to the community and something to work for beside the daily dole of bread. More and more in climates where the growing season lasts from six to seven months of the year, the growers are trying to win workers to a year-round residence, even though there is no regular employment for the winter months. With a cabin rent free, odd bits of work, and the many things which the farmer can allow to the migrant, life on the farm is easier for him than it would be in the city with everything to buy and rent to pay.

And how the migrant does appreciate being wanted and planned for as if he were valued in community life. One grower said to his young Mexican truck driver, "Suppose you let me pay you just what you need to live on during the summer months, letting the rest accumulate until the dull season. Then you will have money enough to build another room on the shack and you can start buying your

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home. I'll sell you the cabin and enough ground for a garden spot on payments. If you will do this, I will give you a bonus on what your department of work has made in profits this year." The man accepted the offer and is housed the entire year. He has enough odd jobs to help out in the winter expense and much assistance in the shape of milk and vegetables from the grower. This plan might not be a safe one with all employers, but in this instance it worked well, and two Mexican babies have a settled home. This particular employer has many families remaining the entire year. Some of his workers leave for a brief season, but many of these return year after year because of the sympathetic attitude of the employer, and each one is hoping that he may be one of the fortunate ones needed during the entire year.

One group of migrants imported for the beet fields of Michigan have found their place in community life and are settled residents. This group, numbering into the thousands of souls, is made up of Mexicans and Indians, who make good mechanics if given any opportunity for training. In Michigan this fact solves much of the difficulty regarding employment for the months after the work in the beet fields are over. The Mexican can spend the months necessary in the beet fields and then General Motors or the Ford plant absorbs many of them. By this plan they not only have a livelihood for the entire year, but they are also getting the training which takes them out of the migratory class.

The Russian-German, who was the first migrant beet worker in many sections, speedily ceased to be a nomad and

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today is an employer of migratory labor. But because of his heredity and temperament, and because of our attitude toward the darker-skinned alien, the Mexican is slower to become resident. He thinks of Mexico as home, and in some dim distant day plans to return. The fact that he usually lingers long before embarking on this homegoing and sometimes never goes back to Mexico, does not alter his mental attitude that he is a transient in a foreign land. There is little inducement offered him to become resident. He drifts in the hope of finding something to lighten the monotony of his drab existence. We often blame him for his unstable life, when if we understood, we should pity him. He loves music and life and friendliness. He meets little of it on the ranch, with the toilsome hours filled from dawn until dusk. As Professor Coen of Colorado Agricultural College said in an address given before the Interdenominational Council for Spanish Speaking Work, "If you were penned up on a beet ranch or a truck farm, able to reach outside life only at the will of a busy or an indifferent employer; if you were toiling from early morning until light failed, you would go out in the winter and you would spend your last dollar for a car, and so would I."

The Japanese does migrate in his work. He must do so, owing to our laws and the sentiment in some of the states where he works. But as a rule he leaves his family in one place so that the education of the children may be uninterrupted. The splendid achievement of the Japanese girls in a Red Cross class in home nursing and first aid was made possible because of this fact. The fathers were asparagus workers, sometimes going far afield from home in their

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search for work. Fifteen of the teen-age daughters spent their Saturdays studying under the Council nurse. Their English was faulty, but their understanding was keen, and when the state examination was passed it was discovered that the grade for the group was well over ninety. Today these girls are spreading the knowledge of home hygiene throughout the little Japanese settlement.

In Colorado there is a very definite effort to improve the housing conditions. Growers are making many of the shacks weather-proof, and are offering inducements to keep the worker in the region throughout the year. That he does not have settled residence is not always the fault of the grower. In one instance the house was rebuilt, many inducements were offered, and the utmost of kindness surrounded the migratory family. In spite of all this they packed up and left, leaving the employer very much in need of a worker; the urge of the migratory habit was too strong to resist. The officials of the Great Western Sugar Company in Colorado have done much to find occupation for the beet worker during the idle months of the year. Through the efforts of a Great Western official, one year over a thousand migrants were used on the railroads.

To the criticism that the migrant will not respond to an opportunity for a higher standard of living, there are many potent answers. Many of the mothers long for different things—a house and flowers. If the Oriental or the Latin is in one place long enough for a seed to sprout, there you will find in boxes and cans the desert or other flowers. In one cabin where twelve people lived in two rooms, the front of the cabin was bordered with sand lilies, white and

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pure against the dingy wall. In spite of the crowded rooms and illness in the home, there was cleanliness and a real attempt at making the place homelike. The fifteenth baby had just breathed and died; six out of the fifteen had found life too hard and had slipped out in the first few years of existence. This family had been in contact with a Christian worker. Through the influence of this woman, the girls had been kept in school through the grades, but when it came to high school, the eldest girl said: "If I could go all the time, I would love it. I wish I could go; then perhaps I could learn to do something different. But you cannot be in and out of high school and keep up with your class; I would never finish. No, I suppose I shall just keep with beets." The father wanted better things for his family, but with his lack of training for anything but the work in the fields, there seemed little hope.

Perhaps the most outstanding instance of acceptance of the new ideals was that of a family in the fruit. The welfare worker from a sense of duty spent much time on the children of this family, although the parents seemed so hopeless that it appeared likely to be wasted effort. The visiting supervisor, visiting the camp, was appalled. On the next visit, months afterward, the nurse turned the car into the lane leading to the tent of this particular family. The supervisor demurred. "Why show me something which cannot be remedied; let me see something encouraging during these first hours." The eyes of the nurse twinkled as she pushed onward without paying any attention to the demur. Arriving, the visitor gasped and stared. It wasn't a tent, it was a house. There were curtains at the

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windows; the gate was patched; the baby in a pen on the porch was fairly clean; no children were wandering around half clad and dingy. Then the nurse bubbled over with pent-up glee. The family had so improved in morals and habits that the grower had declared that any family capable of improving as this one had was worthy of a chance. He had moved them into a house and had given the man work for the winter. All the children old enough were in school, and the living conditions were so transformed that it was almost impossible to believe that this was the family known as "those dirty Blacks!"

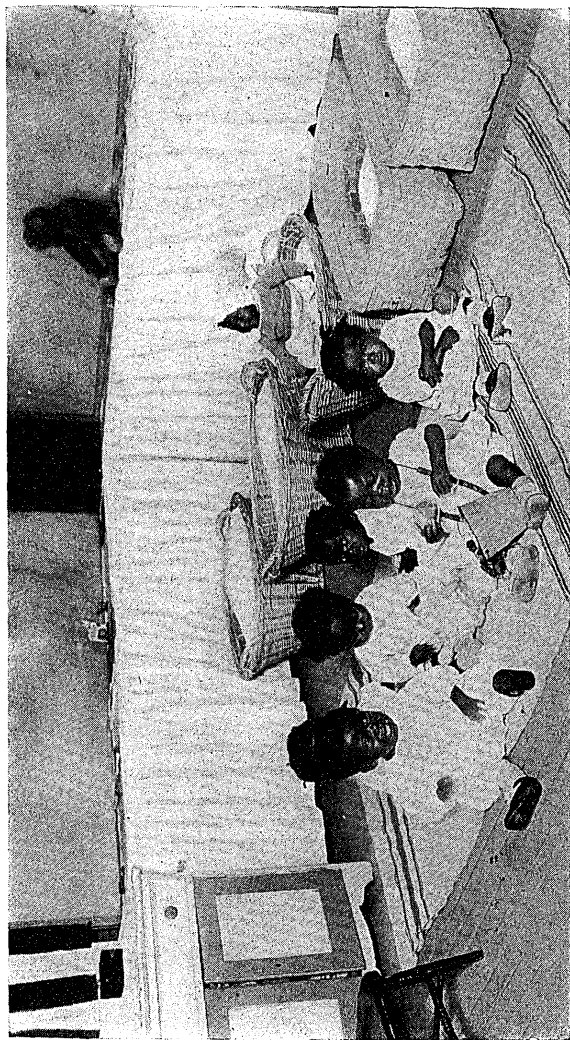
Sometimes a whole group responds to the chance for a different life. This story was told by a worker at a meeting which included both social and religious workers. A certain brickyard has model cottages for its employees. During the busy months the workers pay a small rental for the house; during the dull season they occupy their homes rent free. The company has some rigid rules; for example, the surest way to be given an immediate discharge is to fail to report to the clinic if illness appears in the family. To be reported absent from school except through absolute necessity is fatal. In that colony disease is not concealed. School attendance is regular. Yet the several hundred workers come from a class which habitually migrates. They have found that the officials of the company are friendly. They wish to stay because they have found a place which holds welcome and appreciation for them. The waiting list on the books of the company is long, for a worker seldom leaves.

In one county, which in previous years has been a black

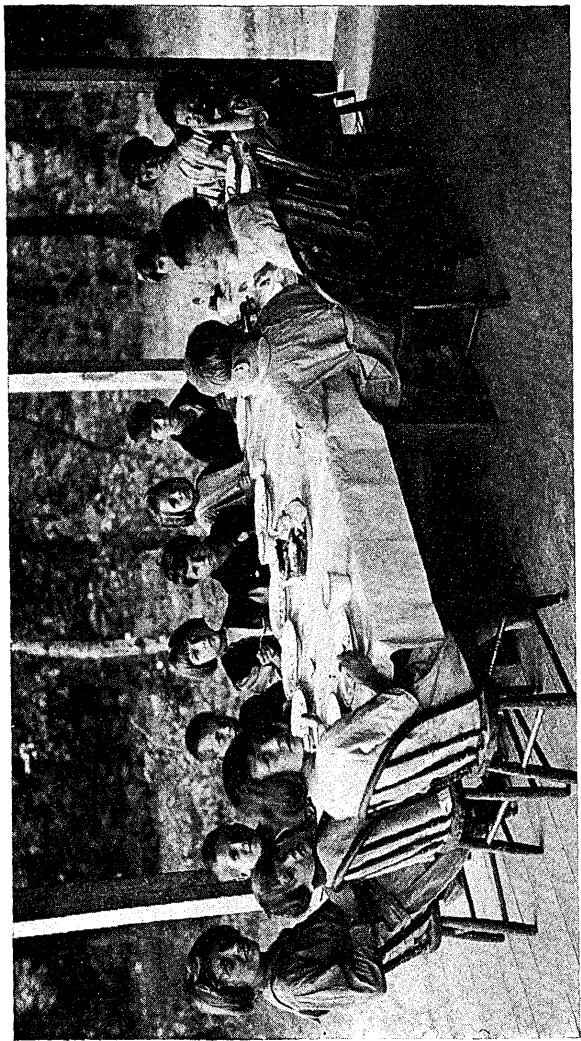
ROVING WITH THE MIGRANTS

spot in migratory labor districts, the school attendance officer reports that the migratory labor problem no longer exists. The community began to reflect that the unsatisfactory character of the migratory worker might be changed if there were year-round work. The community leaders decided that other crops could be added to the fruit which up to then had been the chief source of income. Tomatoes, spinach, and cauliflower furnished work for the migrant for ten months of the year. More wealth came into the county. The workers kept the children in one school during the entire term, and the annual migration out into the vineyards in August was no more than a vacation trip to relieve the monotony of the year. The church can touch these children. Most of the families have acquired homes, and this vast county is no longer the haunt of the roving procession. What has been done here can be done in other localities *if* the communities face the task. Especially is this true in the states where the growing season lasts through so many months of the year and diversification of crops is possible.

Increase in the interest in bettering conditions in camps and canneries on the part of growers and cannery executives has been a hopeful thing. However, there is much yet to be done. Legislation which could protect in some states goes unenforced many times because of the indifference of the community. Proposed legislation designed to promote better conditions and safeguard the child in agriculture is defeated for the same reason, plus the more selfish one that the community does not want to be deprived of the benefits of child labor. For the children do



A CORNER OF THE NURSERY AT A MIGRANT CENTER MAINTAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF WOMEN FOR HOME MISSIONS.



AFTER THE MORNING CLEAN-UP, WORSHIP, HANDWORK AND GAMES IN THE MIGRANT CENTER, THE CHILDREN ASSEMBLE FOR A WHOLESOME LUNCH.

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labor. In many states in the Union, children may be found working long hours under unhealthful conditions, in cold and dampness, in extreme heat, in postures which cramp and cripple. Few states have laws that adequately protect. Most laws explicitly exempt the child in agricultural pursuits from whatever protection they give to children in other occupations. Unless the proposed child labor amendment expressly does this, and until that clause is amended, it will do little for the child in the cotton field, even should it become part of the national law.

Such little children work in bean fields. They pick peas, and they shuck corn. They work in the tomato canneries; they pick cranberries; they are found in the blueberry patches; and you find them by the hundreds in the cotton fields. They sucker and worm the tobacco plants, bag and pick up potatoes, they weed onions, and they block and thin and top beets. The spinach fields take them; nuts are picked up by them. In the mountain regions they gather the wild huckleberries and carry heavy pails of the fruit long distances. The berry fields are full of children, particularly the strawberry patches. Hops afford the child employment, as it is a "family" job. They work in canneries at much too early an age. The older children cut the "cots," and the peaches and apples which are to be dried. They work in the Gulf canneries with oysters and shrimp, where biting acid found in the shrimp eats into aching fingers and makes life miserable.

The measure of success reached in camp work is largely due to the fact that the work has been taken to the migratory worker *where he is*. He will not go out to seek any

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agency. The daily visitor in the camp, living the love she is teaching, has won trust. After that, it is easy to follow the migrant in his wanderings and connect him with the project reasonably near him, be it church or Christian Center. But it takes a more intimate service than a monthly or quarterly visit of the minister on a scattered field to get this result.

Some of the denominational boards are so convinced of the value of the work done in camp and field that they are not only giving to the general work, but are lending trained workers, with their salaries paid, for special needs in camp work. Other denominations have seen the value of making their own work a wide Christian service in some areas rather than a denominational one, and have left the group they have been serving free to "seek out the church of their choice for the sacraments." These workers are very welcome in the migratory camps, and one day when funds permit, a Council worker may supplement by doing the health and recreational work needed in such fields.

The whole task is gigantic. Migratory camps are uncountable; the children and the families unnumbered. Ignorance, superstition, and suffering are rife. Hundreds of Christian social workers are needed, where dozens are being used. But a beginning has been made in working for better conditions; it is an effort in which many groups are joining. As Christian and as social workers, as civic and as church organizations, a changing attitude is declaring that "no economic necessity is so great as to warrant the sacrifice of American childhood," and the forward look is toward the day when America shall be known as one of the

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nations whose ideal is equality of opportunity for every human being within the nation's borders, even though that human being happens to be a migrant.

The migrant is here. He is here by the hundreds of thousands. Because of his coming, many communities have a tangle of races, a snarl of racial antagonism, and a mixture of religions, with resulting frictions and lack of tolerance which is appalling. Community attitudes are unchristian. The situation spells tragedy for the community and for the migrant. With all agencies of welfare accepting the challenge, the program must fail unless the one thing needful is put into the service. For if intellects only are trained and physical health safeguarded without influencing moral tendencies and creating new ideals, the result will be that we shall have raised up a more clever race of criminals. The church must lead and the spirit of Christ must be put into our economic and our community relationships if our migrant is to become our Christian citizen, and if as community and as migrant we are to glimpse the supreme truth that:

The crest and crowning of all good—
Life's final star—is brotherhood.

APPENDIX

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

AT THE monthly meeting of a missionary society in a community located in the heart of an apple section, the story of the Migrant Work was told. Everyone present was keenly interested in this new home missionary work. One of the women recognized as migrants the procession of Fords and trucks, heavily laden with men, women, and children, and their possessions, which she had seen some weeks before on their way to the apple orchards not many miles distant. At the opening of the discussion period which followed the presentation, she remarked, "Why, this is a missionary task right on our own doorstep! What can we do?" In answer to this question the leader suggested that they get together representatives of different organizations in the community able to help with the special phases of a welfare program which would meet the needs of their situation.

If you have migrants in your community, perhaps some of the following organizations will be ready to cooperate:

1. Your own church
2. Other churches in your community
3. Interdenominational church organizations
4. Y.W.C.A.
5. Y.M.C.A.
6. Local clubs
 - a. Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions, and similar business clubs
 - b. Women's clubs

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7. Consumers' League
8. Red Cross
9. Visiting Nurses' Association
10. Board of Health
11. Board of Education
12. Chamber of Commerce
13. Home and Farm Bureaus
14. The Grange
15. Growers' Association
16. Cannery Association
17. University Extension Clubs for Rural Work
18. American Association of Home Economics

It would be well to arrange for a meeting of the representatives from as many groups as possible to review your situation. Undoubtedly you will discover that there is certain information which must be obtained before definite plans for any project can be made. In securing this information, it would be well to approach employers and enlist their cooperation in a plan for a welfare program for their workers. It would stimulate interest if each representative were asked to secure a part of the information desired. The following are some of the things you will want to know:

1. How many migrants are there in or near your community?
2. Where are they? Are they centrally located or widely scattered?
3. What is their nationality?
4. What is their kind of work—cannery or agricultural?
5. Where do they live? What are the legal requirements regarding housing and sanitation? Are they observed?
6. How long are the migrants in the community?

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7. Does the period conflict with the school term?
8. Is there provision made for their schooling?
9. Where do they go next?
10. Who are the employers?
11. Would these employers be interested in helping to do something for the children?
12. What is the legal age at which children may be employed?
13. Are there children employed under legal age in the migrant camp?
14. Is there any provision for the care of this group of small children?
15. How many young people are there employed during the daytime who would be free for a recreational program in the evening?

After securing the necessary facts regarding your own situation, you will probably be anxious to know how other groups are reaching the migrants in their communities. You may want to know what type of program will be best suited to your group. Possibly you will need suggestions as to possible workers for your project and help in setting up the program. For all this, get in touch with the Council of Women for Home Missions, 105 East 22nd Street, New York City, whose Committee on Migrant Work is helping in this very way in many sections of the country.

The next step is to enlist the interest and cooperation of all in your community. This can be done through meetings of the organizations cooperating or through a union meeting when the Migrant Work as a national project and the possibility of work with your own migrants can be presented. The source material and discussion outline which

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follow may be suggestive. Plans for follow up should be carefully laid so that all may share in the project.

It may be that there are no migrants in your immediate neighborhood, but in all probability they will be found in your county or state. They may be located in a very small rural community where resources are so limited that nothing can be done by the community alone. In this event the same general plan of procedure of enlisting the cooperation of county or state organizations, as was suggested for local groups, would be effective.

In addition to the actual work with the migrants there are other definite ways in which you can help. You can be of inestimable aid in the great educational program. Through various mediums such as daily newspapers, church periodicals, club magazines, meetings of your club, missionary society, Sunday school or young people's group, you can make known the great need of the migrant children. Plan for a program or a series of programs for the study of the migrants. The migrants might be a special project for you or your organization. This would lead to other ways in which you could help. Only as the need is known and those knowing respond, can the migrant problem be solved.

SUGGESTED OUTLINE FOR STUDY OF THE MIGRANT PROBLEM

Supplementing the material found in this book a packet of helps is issued by the Council of Women for Home Missions, 105 East 22nd Street, New York City. Price: 25 cents.

I. THE MIGRANT

AS A NATIONAL PROBLEM: The health menace; educational liability; civic responsibility; moral challenge.

AS A NATIONAL ASSET: Contribution to community wealth; a necessary part of community life; much of home comfort and luxury the contribution of the migrant; racial contributions.

II. REGIONAL DIFFERENCES

THE EASTERN MIGRANT *and* THE WESTERN MIGRANT:
Racial groups; numbers and crops; possibilities of preventing migrancy; type of work needed: center; health worker; visiting teacher; recreational and club work.

III. YOUR OWN STATE

SITUATION: Crops and migration; where are the migrants?

Is the Council of Women at work in your community with its program for the migratory family?

Is another agency doing an adequate service for the group?

Is the presence of the migrant in your community a menace or an asset?

If your local school should have a sudden influx of migratory children, what would be your attitude and

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what your instructions to your children? Would you include the migratory child in any good time given to your own children?

If migratory families should remain in the community during the winter months, what should be the attitude of the local church—indifference or the acceptance of the fact that these people are a part of the community?

LEGISLATION: Does legislation protect the child in agriculture?

Does legislation exist to safeguard housing, sanitation, education?

If not, what is being done to secure enactment of such legislation?

If legislation does exist, is it enforced?

Is there an educational campaign to change community attitudes? To pave the way for enforcement of legislation?

IV. COOPERATIVE WORK

AGENCIES: Cooperative effort by the churches; related agencies; the employer; the community.

V. YOUR OPPORTUNITY

AS AN ORGANIZATION: Council of churches; woman's interdenominational group; young people's society; children's group.

AS AN INDIVIDUAL: An employer; a neighbor; a voter; a Christian.

How would you go about the task of educating the migrant to accept an improved standard of living?

SUGGESTED OUTLINE FOR STUDY

Would you invite the migrant into your own home that visual education and friendliness might win to imitation? Or would you send a paid teacher into the shack of the migrant and keep entirely aloof from the migratory worker who is perhaps serving on your own ranch or in the cannery of the community?

How may a nomad become a neighbor?

*In whatsoever land a stranger sojourneth,
there shall ye give him his inheritance.*

SOURCE MATERIAL

Children in Agriculture. Children's Bureau, United States Department of Labor, Washington, D. C. 25 cents.

Child Labor—Facts and Figures. Children's Bureau, United States Department of Labor, Washington, D. C. 25 cents.

Child Labor Laws and Child Labor Facts: An Analysis by States. National Child Labor Committee, 331 Fourth Avenue, New York City. 25 cents. (Single sheets for any one state, free.)

Data Books of the North American Home Missions Congress. Volume I. Home Missions Council, 105 East 22nd Street, New York City. \$1.00.

That Mexican. ROBERT N. McLEAN. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York City. 1928. \$2.00. Pictures vividly the Mexican migrants, a part of the migrant group.

Jumping Beans. ROBERT N. McLEAN. Friendship Press, New York City. 1930. \$1.00. Stories of the Mexican migrants.

Social Adjustment. ROBERT CLOUTMAN DEXTER, PH.D. F. S. Crofts & Co., New York City. 1927. \$3.50.

The Expansion of Rural Life. JAMES M. WILLIAMS. F. S. Crofts & Co., New York City. 1926. \$3.25

The following leaflets are published by the Council of Women for Home Missions, 105 East 22nd Street, New York City.

Single copies free:

"Whither Bound."

"Together."

SOURCE MATERIAL

"Migrants in the Bean Field, Delaware."

"Migrants in Cotton Camps, California."

"Migrants in Cranberries, New Jersey."

"In Cannery Camps, California."

Price 10 cents:

"Nomad Neighbors."

"College Girl's Diary."

Additional material on specific areas may be secured from the following organizations:

National Child Labor Committee, 331 Fourth Avenue,
New York City.

Children's Bureau and Women's Bureau, United States
Department of Labor, Washington, D. C.

National Consumers' League, 156 Fifth Avenue, New
York City.

State Departments of Health.

State Departments of Education.

State Departments of Labor.

THE COUNCIL OF WOMEN FOR HOME MISSIONS

THE COUNCIL OF WOMEN FOR HOME MISSIONS, which was organized in 1908, has for its purpose the unifying of efforts of the women's home mission boards and societies of the United States and Canada by consultation and cooperation in action, and it represents Protestant church women in such national movements as they desire to promote interdenominationally. Twenty-four boards are now constituent.

In cooperation with the Missionary Education Movement the Council publishes home mission literature for all ages, including study books, reading books, and supplementary material. In cooperation with the Federation of Woman's Boards of Foreign Missions of North America and the Missionary Education Movement, interdenominational institutes, conferences and schools of missions are promoted, nineteen being affiliated with the Council. A joint committee on Leadership Training on which a representative of the International Council of Religious Education also serves, plans coaching institutes for the training of leaders and assists in arranging chains of institutes.

A joint committee of the Federation and Council plans the material and promotes the World Day of Prayer annually observed on the first Friday in Lent in more than forty-five countries. In the United States more than 2000 and in Canada more than 800 places hold interdenominational meetings.

Through the Council, fifteen denominations working as a unit are studying the problem of migratory labor, and are

COUNCIL OF WOMEN FOR HOME MISSIONS

conducting demonstration centers among family groups in the Chesapeake area, southern New Jersey, Colorado and the Pacific Coast. The Christian social service program at these centers includes day nursery and first-aid, fundamentals of cooking and sewing, and supervised play. Centers have served Italians, Poles, Lithuanians, Bohemians, Negroes, Mexicans, Japanese, Filipinos, Chinese, Hindus and white Americans working in fruit and vegetable canneries and on truck farms and ranches. Local and regional groups are stimulated to carry on work in their districts, the Council cooperating to help standardize the work.

The Home Missions Council and Council of Women for Home Missions have joint committees on Alaska, City and New Americans, Indian Work. The Joint Committee on Indian Work has as objectives the unifying and correlating of the Indian work of denominational boards and the providing of directors of religious education for Government schools, especially the large boarding schools, several having 1000 pupils. A Service Committee of this joint committee has been organized to act in liaison capacity between the Government and the mission boards and between the various mission boards themselves.

Other committees of the Council are active in connection with international relations, legislative matters, student work, and various phases of home missions. The Council is one of eleven women's national organizations comprising the National Committee on the Cause and Cure of War which holds an important conference in Washington, D. C., each January.



BV Ballard
 2695 Rowing with the
 L2B2 migrants.

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JUN 10 '38

MAY 12 '38

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JUL 29 '38

DEC 4 '40

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